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The American Record Guide

Incorporating  THE AMERICAN TAPE GUIDE

for APRIL, 1960

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ON THE COVER: Yehudi Menuhin, whose superb playing (and conducting) of the three Bach Concerti on a Capitol release is reviewed by H. G. on page 612.

The Critic As Yezidi

Below, an illustration of the Ragini Gujari-Dupaka, one of a series of raga paintings of the Kulu school made during the reign (1767-1806) of Raja Pritam Singh—Jagdish Mittal Collection



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The circumstances of music

By WILLIAM KAY ARCHER

I LEAVE it to you to determine whether man did well or ill by inventing history. Invent it he did—casting aside in the process the sweet craft of myth-making—and once done, Pandora snapped the box shut in vain. Our entire intellectual stuffs are alike woven and frayed by history.

History, along with her dowdy though lovable sisters, sociology and anthropology, is implacable in her demands; history is relentless in the recurrent shocks she gives us. History, above all, permits us to make our judgments only after a bow to herself and, by her presence, compels us ever and over to think out whether she has any method in her madness after all.

A history of the philosophy of history is chafing study indeed. Cycles and circles abound. Boxes are stuffed into boxes. Randomness emerges in a dionysian frenzy, only to be put down by an apollonian severity which preaches that by immutable rule virtue triumphs, and all we have to do is wait.

Faced with this horrifying congeries, the critic is wont to become a Yezidi, one of those eminently logical Persians who worship the Devil on the grounds that

God is good and can take care of Himself, but the Devil needs constant placation.

For history has made the critic's function a rough go. He has to hack his way through a constricting jungle of Hegel, and when he emerges at last, breathless, into the clearing, he finds before him, advancing menacingly, the huge and terrifying figure of Freud brandishing an umbrella.

History, in short, is invoked to support morality. And morality, in short, is uneasy in the presence of music.

Sociology (as one of its best votaries, Murray Hausknecht, has pointed out) is inherently subversive. Once the basic principles of a society are laid open to examination, they begin to lose their immutable sovereignty.

Add to this the anthropologists' findings that countless cultures get along very nicely without any of our principles at all, and we begin to feel chartless on a cruel sea. Then the historian comes along and punctures our frail inflated life-raft. He informs us, rather too calmly, that civilizations die, and while the distant future may appear bright, the present symptoms are discouraging and the prognosis is gloomy.

Furthermore, when we know what others do and why, we are drawn into a wider world and one in which glee and discomfort are very much mixed.

So, *vida brevis est*, we may be prepared to concede; after all, the evidence is in. But (we console ourselves) there is always *ars longa*.

But is there? What of Ozymandias,

This article may be said to represent a development of certain themes implied in Prof. Archer's collaboration with Shirish N. Gor entitled "The Instant of Crisis", which appeared in the March issue. The author is a member of the English faculty at Fairleigh Dickinson University, an acknowledged authority on the culture of the East, and an essayist at once trenchant, urbane, and persuasive.

king of kings? And, what is more to the point, what of Ozymandias' court-musician?

The purpose of this piece, then, is to apply new and foreign standards to the familiar theme of our own musical judgment. More precisely, I am curious to see how *our* musical canons appear when viewed by a substantially unfamiliar critical standard.

"My time will yet come", announced Mahler, and if this year is any evidence he was right. This is the invariable argument of the modern musician in defense of virtue and atrocity both, and the stock answer to disavowal. In the orthodox romantic music histories on which we were brought up, the appeal to the future is standard operating procedure.

It is essentially a curious argument. That "the future will tell"—a familiar fallacy in the history of ideas—is an offshoot of our philosophy of progress: the notion that good as the past may have been, the future will be (at least technically) better. In this view, the harpsichord is simply an inept piano. But the obverse of the devoted antiquarian comes to pretty much the same thing: to play music written for harpsichord on the piano is to commit treason. In both instances, relative value is given to a time difference; difference as such is not allowable.

The basic appeal to the *taste* of the future is the contention which really concerns us. It argues, in essence, that taste is not simply fashion (expandable in the individual by learning and wider experience), but is an average of judgment computable only over many decades. Our judgment of the past is good; of the present—our own era!—inescapably faulty. The vindication of the present moment lies in the future in a straight line, like the consequence of a political act.

One could argue easily enough that the present spate of revival of pre-Mannheim composers is, like the intellectualization of jazz, a measure of the anxieties and meretriciousness of our era and precious little involved in musical values. Whether Telemann or Dave Brubeck will "survive" is essentially a

meaningless question. Music is a repository to answer the needs of a 'consumer'. The consumer's need is not entirely a musical one, nor can it be. It cannot be, simply enough, because the *experience* of music is necessarily a private and accretive act, just as the *production* of music is a social and independent one.

The fact that a composer has "survived" is, in the scope of history, inconsequential. Anything which we can respectably call musical history is merely a smidgin in time. Given the fog and haze of change obscuring Chaucer and Beowulf, we may justly fear for the permanence of Shakespeare. Similarly, Beethoven's "survival" or Wagner's or Sebastian Bach's are flashes in a tiny pan. Play for me the great Hittite composers, fiddle an Egyptian rondelay of the Second Dynasty, and we will bring up again the question of survival and the judgment of the present. We have no knowledge of the Babylonian Brahms nor the Achaemenid Arensky. Survival is fortuity and, in any event, irrelevant to the auditor.

The same difficulty meets "revival". Ernest Newman cruelly and vividly disposed of the Telemann boom; the same work is under way for Vivaldi; sooner or later it will reach Josquin and the Gabriellis. I do not question the real merit of these composers any more than I question the merit of Spohr, Pfitzner, and Reger, who will have their turn.

Rather I pose the counter-question: in discussing the taste of survival and revival, are we not in point of fact discussing extra-musical sociological phenomena of great intrinsic interest, to which the musical judgment is at best auxiliary?

The critical act is time-centered. The critic—anyone who listens to music with some effort at discrimination—ultimately must answer and re-answer his question of the value of a piece in terms of the here and now. An appeal to the future, exactly like an appeal to the past, begs the question. When, for example, Mr. Hindemith assures the readers of the *Times* that only Stravinsky and Bartók will last, he has told them nothing at all. He doesn't know (nor do you, nor do I,



Giannini's "The Taming of the Shrew" at the New York City Opera

whether they will or not and, in any instance, this does not tell us how we should behave toward them.

That audiences a century ahead will "share" my judgment that Gianniini's "Taming of the Shrew" is a masterwork is cold comfort, as is the certainty that they, unlike ourselves, will get to hear it in repertory. The vindication is worth little and, besides, their Gianniini can hardly be ours. The assay of the future, like our judgment of the past, interposes a new set of facts and circumstances, historical in nature, between the work and the auditor. Having heard Wagner, we cannot hope to hear (that is, experience musically) Mozart with his contemporaries' ears.

Should we possess that Egyptian rondelay, we still could estimate it only by the way in which it affects us, and thus the question of its Egyptian value would remain unanswerable.

It may not be possible, considering the parlousness of our own time and the nearness of our civilization to its terminus—witness the music of Cage and Stockhausen—to ruminate fruitfully on the nature of music once again. We might, however, in a gesture of postponement, try to examine this 'consumer' of music in terms of what he does rather than what he is supposed to do. We can isolate two strands: the recognition of constant acoustic components which man ever and again rediscovers (it is this which we mean when we speak of music as a universal language); and, as well, a cultural matrix into which music is plunged by different peoples in different ways at different times.

Our main difficulty in observing this fairly is our own Teuton-cum-Puritan

tradition which views relaxation with suspicion, suspects the sensual, and requires the didactic to feel comfortable. Our extreme praise for music is "pure" and "abstract"; an organ fugue is inherently better (and safer) than an opera tune. And we are compulsive, it would seem, in justifying endless evaluations.

A more relaxed view of music is labeled superficial or worse. Yet the Mediterranean and, even more, the Indian view of music must strike us as being at once more tolerant and more comprehensive than our own.

This should not surprise us. After all, the speculative instrument, the human head, relies very much on time. If musical criticism is experience modified by introspection, a culture with a long history and much encouragement of speculative thought should produce convincing results.

The theory of structure involved, being necessarily common in greater or lesser degree to all musics, need not long detain us. But we note that the response to music is musical and more than musical. Older musicians, we may remark, rarely more than glance at technique; they seem principally concerned with the *ethos* of the music. Criticism confined to discussion of tone rows or riffs seems somehow barren; analysis of this sort seems to camouflage and delay the unavoidable question of the meaning of the music.

That meaning, I think, is (as in Housman's definition of poetry) recognizable to us in the same way as a rat is to a terrier, "by the sensations it arouses in us".

These sensations are, in Harry Partch's term, corporeal. They involve us totally. My recognition that a fugue is substantial—

(Continued on page 664)

A word for American recording engineers

IN THE October, 1959, issue of *The American Record Guide* there appeared an article by Dr. Fritz A. Kuttner entitled "Musical Art vs. Technology". The title at once intrigued me, for it seemed that there was to be some sort of combat between two professions which, as an employee in a large recording studio, I had grown accustomed to seeing at work in close co-operation.

In reading the article, I found that Dr. Kuttner presented a convincing plea for a recording engineer versed in music theory as well as the customary electronic skills. Although I am in complete agreement with the author's thesis, I must take exception to some of the statements he made in presenting his argument. I feel that on several occasions he advanced ideas that may be misleading to the layman who is already having trouble enough trying to keep pace with the latest developments in recorded sound.

Dr. Kuttner notes that, under the conditions of modern recording technology, the performing artist actually can be placed at the mercy of the recording engineer. Of course this is true, just as a patient is at the mercy of his doctor, or an airplane passenger is at the mercy of the pilot. Most people do not hesitate to put themselves in the hands of these specialists, who can certainly do more harm through carelessness than a recording engineer.

I think Dr. Kuttner may be influenced in his choice of words by a misunderstanding of the recording engineer's actual con-

trol over the musical forces with which he is associated. He says that the engineer can change such things as reference pitch, tempo, or the spacing of silent intervals, even after the recording session. Now the only way he could influence these characteristics during the actual session would be to convince the artists to play the music in some foreign key, or at a tempo different from the one the conductor wished. I think the possibility that this might happen is too remote for any serious consideration.

After the session, to be sure, the engineer could alter the pitch and tempo with no difficulty. As an example, he could stretch a 25-minute selection to, say, 28 minutes in order to fill out one side of an LP record. The easiest way to do this would be to operate the playback tape recorder at a slightly slower than normal speed, which certainly is possible on the equipment at his disposal. However, by doing this, the A below middle C in the music, usually 440 cycles per second, would now be about 392 cps., and 392 cps. is actually the frequency of G! I am sure that no artist would tolerate such a drop of two semitones under any circumstances. And can you imagine the public's reaction to a Bach B minor Mass performed in A minor? I think even the most reckless of engineers would hesitate to try anything like this.

Of course, silent spaces could be extended or shortened by editing, and here it becomes the obligation of the artist to examine these intervals before the finished disc is approved. This responsibility is brought into sharper focus when we consider that he will frequently choose to pause after each section during the recording session to review the work so far completed and to readjust his instrument.

The author is on the technical staff of the RCA Victor Record Division, Radio Corporation of America. His musical background has included two years of voice study in Italy.

By JOHN M. WORAM

Some artists even alternate instruments during the course of a recording session. It now becomes essential for explicit instructions to be issued as a guide for timing the silent intervals.

Dr. Kuttner doubts that the artist will hear much of what the technicians have done with the physical sound of his performance (being more concerned with musical perfection, phrasing, etc.) If he is right, this is most unfortunate, for it would seem that the sensitive artist would be even more susceptible to spurious effects than the technician. After years of musical training, any echo chamber, reverberation, or other false qualities should offend a musician's ears, just as an incorrect note would. At this point he should refuse to approve the test pressing, although, as Dr. Kuttner states, it "would have to be a powerful artist who can make the rejection stick". Yet a powerful artist always can transfer his allegiance to another company if he feels that the integrity of his work is being compromised. It therefore behooves the engineer to honor the musician's wishes, for I am sure that no engineer would care to explain why an artist of stature was now recording for a rival company—the engineer might also find himself obliged to seek employment elsewhere, under less favorable circumstances than the artist would enjoy.

I question the advisability of an artist's listening to his test pressings on a home phonograph of doubtful or average quality. Any musician choosing to judge his efforts on an inferior system is doing himself a grave disservice and would have no complaint if an unsuitable pressing were thus approved. I should add that the "takes" to be used for the master tapes are those chosen by the artist, in conjunction with the A & R department. This is

in effect a part of the recording process, and it is entirely out of the engineer's jurisdiction.

In considering the engineer's responsibility to the music, Dr. Kuttner says: "They must have clear ideas of the score, of the style in which it should be performed, and the way in which it ought to be heard." I think this may be just a bit too severe. For example, listen to the Bach Toccata and Fugue in D minor played by Albert Schweitzer. Then hear the same work interpreted by Carl Weinrich. Here are two learned musicians, each with clear ideas of the score, of the style in which it should be performed, and the way in which it ought to be heard, and yet the difference is remarkable. Imagine assigning an engineer of the Weinrich persuasion to an artist of the Schweitzer school! Naturally, the engineer must have a reasonable understanding of music, but if, as Dr. Kuttner advocates, he has a thorough musical training, while the artist has merely a fundamental knowledge of recording techniques, why we might even do away with the artist completely!

Of course, this situation is no more realistic than Paul Henry Lång's unreasonable position that there can be "no such thing as an engineering point of view on art". If the recording art ever deteriorates to this point, it would seem that the less musical training an engineer had the less likely he would be in a position to confound things by having a "point of view".

Since Dr. Kuttner wants the engineer to be thoroughly trained in music, I imagine he disagrees with Dr. Lång entirely. Fortunately, there seems to be a practical position about midway between the artistic vacuum advocated by Dr. Lång and Dr. Kuttner's theory. It is toward this point that the perceptive audio engineer must guide himself if he is to compete with the Europeans.

Perhaps our educational system for engineers is as bad as Dr. Kuttner suggests. However, I would feel more assured of his competence as an impartial judge if he had devoted a bit more than

(Continued on page 675)

Mostly Madeline: five by Bemelmans

CAEDMON'S latest is named for that Parisian *enfant terrible*, Madeline, who is the heroine of several long poems both written and illustrated by Ludwig Bemelmans. Every child must know the familiar lines which introduced her to the world: "In an old house in Paris that was covered with vines lived twelve little girls in two straight lines. . . the youngest one was Madeline."

The first of these books, entitled simply *Madeline*, appeared in 1939. Her further adventures, as related in *Madeline's Rescue* and *Madeline and the Bad Hat*, did not appear until much later, in 1953 and 1956-57 respectively. (In view of this chronology I wonder why Caedmon places *Madeline* second on the record and not first.) However, rather than complete the Madeline series Caedmon includes one of Bemelmans' earliest and most delightful poems about a French poodle, *Fifi*, and an animal story, *The Happy Place*.

Perhaps the most astonishing feature of this record is the narration by Carol Channing. As you might remember from the musical comedy *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, Miss Channing has a rather strident voice with a pronounced Western twang and a remarkable ability to produce strange noises. Thus there appear on this record some of the most unpleasant sounds heard since the creation of Eliza Doolittle.

MADELINE AND OTHER BEMELMANS: *Madeline's Rescue*, *Madeline*, *Madeline and the Bad Hat*, *Fifi*, and *The Happy Place*; all told by Carol Channing. Caedmon TC-1113, \$5.95.

(Miss Channing has played Eliza in summer stock.)

In other ways, however, Miss Channing has much to offer. She is able to distinguish every character on this record through use of her enormous vocal range and her ability to imitate accents and eccentricities of speech. The use of accents is strictly her own ideas, for Bemelmans wrote none except for a Yiddish dialogue spoken by the fat couple in *The Happy Place*—they discuss *Haspenpfeffer* in front of the frightened hero, who is a rabbit.

Miss Channing's use of accent ranges from wonderful to ludicrous. Perhaps the happiest moments on the record occur in *Fifi* when Lady Fimple Fample speaks: a British accent whistling through loose dentures; or in *The Happy Place* when the Brooklyn frog transfers his g's with amphibian gusto. On the other hand there are sections where the use of accents is not so successful. In *Madeline and the Bad Hat*, for instance, where most of the characters are French, only the Spanish ambassador and his family speak consistently in French fashion. And at one point Miss Channing renders a cry for help as "Secure!" rather than "Secours!" A slight difference.

The purely narrative parts of this record come through quite well. In the race scene from *The Happy Place* the children who listen will probably hold their breath, as I did, until the rabbit escapes the whippet. In other places, however, Miss Channing comes dangerously close to talking down to her listeners, for she overacts at moments

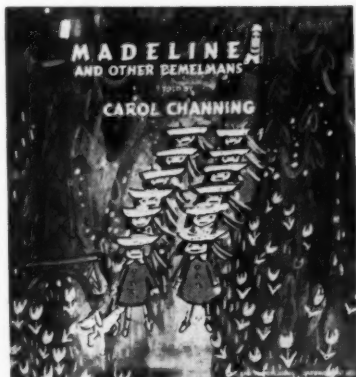
By JANE WENNING

when a normal conversational tone would provide welcome relief. It is rather puzzling that Caedmon should have chosen to do Bemelmans' work, for there are definite disadvantages in recording his poems. He has abundantly illustrated these poems; sometimes several lines of verse are illustrated, sometimes a single word. And in many cases the meaning of the lines or the words is made clear *only* through the pictures, although this is not the case with his prose works such as *The Happy Place*. In short, Bemelmans' verses are inseparable from their companion illustrations. Caedmon has partially solved this problem by the use of music and sound effects. In *Madeline's Rescue*, for instance, the heroine is described in these words: "And nobody knew so well how to frighten Miss Clavel—until the day she slipped and fell." It is only from the illustration that one knows that Madeline is teetering across a bridge railing before

she falls into the Seine. To clarify this, Caedmon inserts a suggestive glissando on the accordion and an unmistakable splash. Unfortunately, there is at least one verse which is unclear when heard on this record. In *Madeline and the Bad Hat* certain lines describe the pranks of the Spanish Ambassador's son: "Something suddenly went 'zing!' /Causing pain and shocked surprise. . ." I had an inkling as to the meaning, and when I consulted the book, sure enough, the picture showed the incorrigible young Spaniard wielding a sling shot.

The music itself does not clarify the meaning; it only supplements the sound effects. And both interrupt the spoken narrative so often that it becomes disjointed and confused. For instance, wherever Madeline and her eleven friends go they are accompanied by a "walking theme" of Paris. And certainly it is not necessary for the accordion to punctuate the lines: "They smiled at the good (major chord) and frowned at the bad (dischord) and sometimes they were very sad (minor chord). However, it may well be that I am criticizing a feature that will endear this record to its real audience: children.

Technically speaking, there are several minor flaws on this record. A pre-echo introduces all except one of the seven bands. And a few long silences occur when one master tape comes to an end and is not immediately followed by the next tape. Altogether, this is not the best record in Caedmon's fine catalogue.



More spoken word reviews on page 667

BOOK REVIEWS

Mr. Haggin as companion

By JOHN W. BARKER

THE IMMEDIATE curiosity of this book is its title. The "musical companion" it names is really not the book, but the author. By which I mean that Mr. Haggin has not fashioned a work that will provide a reliable guide to those who find themselves needing guidance in music; rather he has provided that each purchaser is furnished with a little piece of the author himself as a flawless, infallible, incontrovertible, and omniscient esthetic conscience that can be plugged into the purchaser's listening through his reading.

The publisher's blurb on the back cover announces: "This is a book for readers of all degrees of musical experience. Every reader—whether he is just beginning to listen or has been listening a long time—will benefit by what Mr. Haggin says. . . ." etc., etc. If this noble recommendation is at all true it is only partially so: to the extent that a part of the book and no more is fine for one such group, and the remainder and no more likewise for the other group.

After a modest and promising outline of the role of the critic in his brief first chapter, the author devotes the next three to considerations of "The Meaning of Music" and "Musical Procedures and the Forms They Produce". In general these are intelligent and compact little sketches that can be of value to the reader with little musical background.

But these sections will be rather needless for those with better background, and the author himself suggests that such

readers might well skip them and move on to later ones. Better advice would be that the better-grounded reader should tear out the first four chapters and give them to a less experienced one, each then keeping within the confines of that separation.

This is indeed not a book to help people, but is in essence a platform for the author's opinions. To be sure, these opinions are obviously the product of a sensitive and well-trained student of music and musicians. But they are far too subjective, arbitrary, and controversial to provide a trustworthy introduction to the vast and varied (far more so than Mr. Haggin seems to realize or is willing to admit) splendors of music. This is not to say, however, that better-read music devotees will not find enjoyment and even profit in the balance of this book: quite the contrary, they should find it stimulating and very provocative—if not explosive—reading.

Chapters 5 through 23 are considerations, in varying length and detail, of the following composers or groups, in this order: Beethoven, Schubert, Mozart, Haydn, Berlioz, Bach, Other Music of the Eighteenth Century, Music of Earlier Centuries, Brahms, Wagner, Verdi, Tchaikovsky, Mussorgsky, Other Music of the Nineteenth Century, Strauss (R.), Mahler, Debussy, Music of the Twentieth Century, and American Music.

These chapters are very uneven in content as well as length. Some, such as those on Beethoven and Mozart, are substantial panegyrics on great composers. Others, such as those on Haydn and Verdi, are extremely enthusiastic but are also extremely brief, ending as if suddenly cut

The Listener's Musical Companion,
by B. H. Haggin. Revised Second Edition, 349 pages. Anchor Books (Double-day paperback), \$1.25.

off unfinished. Some of them are long outbursts in defense of composers whom the author thinks are not fully appreciated: it is refreshing to find that Tchaikovsky is much more than a gushing neurotic; and the perceptive and earnest little essay on Berlioz should bring joy to the Berlioz Society. He uses the occasion of his comments on Mussorgsky to deliver a sermon, not entirely out of place, on the need for the authentic texts of musical works. On the other hand, there are composers he does not rate very highly. Brahms is given a particularly vicious going-over. In the case of Bach, Wagner, and Strauss, he will wax very enthusiastic about some of their compositions, but can be blandly ruthless about dismissing much of their other music. The most extreme case of this handling is the instance of Mahler, to whom he devotes a painfully short section, picking out a few snippets that he finds to his taste and discarding all the rest! (He makes no mention at all anywhere of Bruckner, a serious but significant omission.) The collective chapters on eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century music give drastically scant attention to a great number of important composers, some of whom, like Handel, Vivaldi, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Dvořák, and Sibelius are passed over with shocking skimpiness, while others, like Weber, Nielsen, and Vaughan Williams, to name a few, are not discussed at all. (His comments on Gershwin will be too much for most readers to swallow, I suspect.) And the section (only two and a half pages) on "pre-Bach" music is noteworthy for its very shallow understanding of what is involved, complete with a shameful distortion (pp. 119-20) of what "musicologists" have been advocating in attempting to bring neglected music, especially of the earlier periods, to the attention of the public. All of this suggests that the author approaches all music with a rigidly inflexible preconception of what he likes and does not like—period!—rather than coming to each composer to hear what each has to say for what it is worth. Is this an attitude to offer beginners?

Chapter 24 offers a few pages on "Performance" which are simply bouquets

tossed to his favorite musicians—one in particular, as we shall note below—as model interpreters. Then comes Chapter 25: "Jazz". This section comes as a bolt out of the blue (or is it blues?). This is not to denigrate the importance of jazz or to deny the satisfactions that may be obtained therefrom. It is just that in the context thus far built up the interjection of jazz so abruptly is jarring and out of place. Nor is his little essay enough to do the subject justice, in this context or out of it. Further, it is just a bit too much to find Mr. Haggin, having settled the hash of "classical" music in general, turning with more pontifical pronouncements to this new and unrelated field.

The last numbered chapter, "Criticism", suggests some of the pleasure and profit one may find in dipping into the writings of better music critics, a splendid idea in itself. Mr. Haggin recommends Berlioz, Shaw, W. J. Turner, Virgil Thomson, Tovey, Copland, and a few lesser lights. But one looks in vain for some others who merit recommendation, surely Romain Rolland and certainly Ernest Newman, if not Olin Downes as well. (A propos of Shaw: Mr. Haggin bolsters his diatribes against Brahms with samples of some of G.B.S.'s well-known criticisms of that composer. What he neglects to add is that Shaw later admitted that he had been wrong about Brahms.)

The remaining 138 pages of the book are devoted to a general list of recommended recordings. Obviously, any attempts to cover the whole realm of recorded music (mercifully minus jazz) in such a space would be impossible with any degree of concentration or depth, as the author would doubtless be the first to admit. Unfortunately, however, he does not even make the most of what opportunity he has. His approach to the recorded repertory is selective, of course, but ruthlessly so. He makes no attempt to give a representative cross-section of a composer's music, but only one of what he likes. In most cases where there are several recordings of a given work he gives little or no indication of the range of varied interpretation provided—something beginners ought to be made aware of—

but instead simply selects the one version he likes; choices, too, with which many others might not agree. Where he encounters, usually through couplings, music he does not care for, he glibly dismisses it as "uninteresting", or "dull", or even "boring". But it is "uninteresting" that he strews most lavishly: on one page in the discography (p.208) the word appears no less than five times! He has some other expressions he uses repeatedly: singers are frequently "ear-ravishing"; he repeats several times, with his own quotation marks, the description "fresh as the act of creation itself"; and on two successive pages (255, 256) Bruno Walter recordings have "an aura of ripened mastery". But some of his comments are less kind. Though he is always urging that issues or reissues of Landowska recordings are "something to watch for" (another pet phrase), he is frequently very testy in his judgments of those that are available, as witness this on her *Well-Tempered Clavier*: "The gigantesque pounding and distortion that are offered by Landowska and accepted by others as divine revelation, I hear as unmitigated murder." (p.212) Not the best sort of thing for beginners, perhaps.

Moreover, Mr. Haggin has a hero, and it is here that readers may recall past acquaintance with him. For he is the author of the recent *Conversations with Toscanini*. It is plain even in this newer book that Mr. Haggin has never recovered from his association with the Maestro. He does occasionally concede that Toscanini might have done something a little differently, but this is rare, and in general he belongs to the school of unblushing Toscanini idolatry. He loses no opportunity to put in a lengthy plug for Toscanini, or to hold him up as a model. And in his commendation of Virgil Thomson as a fine critic he has to balk abruptly and take exception to some of the critic's unfavorable remarks about Toscanini; and he proceeds to deliver an irate lecture, some two pages in length, showing how

wrong Thomson is. Thomson is still a fine critic, Mr. Haggin thinks, but that one time he obviously struck too close to home for comfort.

As in the discography of his previous book, Mr. Haggin is back at his audio equipment twiddling knobs again and telling us how to set ours. But this kind of thing, and his more detailed denunciations of record engineering are confined mainly to Toscanini recordings, showing an obvious indebtedness to the earlier book.

We have now had ample occasion to note how filled to the brim is this book with the author's likes and dislikes. In the earlier pages he frequently concedes the possibility of views different from his own, but he soon lets this reminder fall by the wayside as he charges happily onward through the china shop. This is not to say that strongly opinionated writing on music is not worth-while. Far from it. Mr. Haggin's opinions may often be exasperating in the extreme, but they are literate, imaginative, lively, and ever so stimulating. In this respect the perceptive remarks of my colleague C.J.L. on the author's style, in his review of *Conversations with Toscanini* (ARG, Sept. 1959, p. 20), apply as readily here.

But the point is that this very quality that makes such provocative reading for those well versed in music makes it conversely inadvisable material for the beginner, and hence it should not be passed off as such. The ideal introduction for the beginner should hardly be a dose of egotistic opinionism, bald hero-worship, and harshly subjective selectivity that restricts, ignores, eliminates, and reduces the range and riches of music, teaching the initiate to limit his appreciation rather than to broaden it.

In short, let the buyer beware. This book is as a draught of heady elixir that can refresh those bolstered by the nourishments and antidotes of experience, but that can prove noxious to such as may quaff it unfortified.

Additional book reviews beginning on page 646

FROM THE EDITOR:

I COULD not be more pleased by the news that Harold Schonberg has been appointed senior music critic of *The New York Times*. Harold began his career as a reviewer for and then as an associate editor of *The American Record Guide* back in the late thirties, and his work graced these pages for nearly two decades. He is a good musician, a real reporter, a facile writer, and above all he understands the office of criticism. Because his criteria are always the highest, he has become known as a stern arbiter, but no one ever has challenged his integrity. He is the kind of craftsman music journalism needs more of, and the ARG takes special pride in this latest achievement by its distinguished alumni. . . As most of our readers must have figured out long ago, it is the artist whose recording draws the closest thing to a "rave" whose photo appears on the front cover. Some months we are hard put to find one worthy of the honor. This month there were too many contenders—it could have been Isaac Stern (page 613), Artur Schnabel (page 614), Carlo Maria Giulini (page 616), Renata Tebaldi (page 628), or Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (page 631). But we chose Yehudi Menuhin for an extra reason, and that is because he should have figured somewhat more prominently in our recent issue on Indian music. No musician of the West has contributed so much to our understanding of the music of the East, and when all the evidence is in he will be due enormous credit for his almost single-handed crusade to bring the musics of the world closer together. . . One of the sets of initials you will miss this month is the L. G. belonging to Larry Gushee, who has resigned (he hopes temporarily, and so do we) to accept a faculty position at the Yale School of Music. . . I am delighted to hear (see the advertisements on pages 645 and 653) that the Deutsche Grammophon and Cantate recordings from Germany will be generally available in America. . . Alfred Wallenstein will do the Brahms Double Concerto with Heifetz and Piatigorsky for RCA Victor in Los Angeles. . . A

consummation wished for on this page last month has been fulfilled: Arthur Lief has recorded for Vanguard the Kurka *Concertino* and *Letters from Japan* by Rebekah Harkness (a gifted lady of means and extraordinary modesty who has been anonymously responsible for some of the most valuable contributions to the LP catalogues in recent years). . . Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic will record three *avant-garde* works for Columbia: Henry Brant's super-stereophonic *Antiphony One*, the *Improvisation sur Mallarmé I* by the French contemporary Pierre Boulez, and the Luening-Ussachevsky "Concerted Piece" for tape recorder and orchestra. . . Speaking of the Philharmonic, I was charmed to read that the Columbia, S. C., community concert group will spend \$10,000 for a single appearance by this orchestra next season with Van Cliburn as the soloist. The first local dealer who sets up an autographing party will sell a powerful lot of Bernstein and Cliburn records. N. B., Columbia and RCA Victor distributors. . . Just five years ago in these pages I extended birthday greetings to Wallingford Riegger, the pride of Albany, Georgia, upon reaching his 70th birthday. Now the grand old man of American music is about to reach 75 (on the 29th of this month), and once again it is a pleasure to wish him many happy returns. More of his works deserve to be recorded, and CRI merits a vote of thanks for its recent attention to his catalogue. . . By the way, CRI has just released a whopping dozen or so LPs; they will be reviewed soon by A. C., who has had to procrastinate a bit lately because he was finishing the first of three books on modern music for Lippincott. . . We shall be doing something special next month on the second RCA Victor-Soria series. . . Also next month you will read the first installment in what will be henceforth a regular series by Paul Kresh entitled "Words Only". . . Steve Smolian begs to be excused from his "Da Capo" duties for this issue only; he just moved and hasn't yet finished unpacking. —J.L.

Other Reviews

(including stereo®)

THERE IS IN SOULS a sympathy with sounds, and as the mind is pitched the ear is pleased with melting airs or martial, brisk or grave; some chord in unison with what we hear is touched within us, and the heart replies.

—William Couper

ADAM: *Giselle* (excerpts); **PONCHIELLI:** *Dance of the Hours*; **BAYER:** *The Doll Fairy* (excerpts); Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Walter. Epic LC-3637, \$4.98.

▲THE *Giselle* excerpts are the lighter sequences culled from both acts without any narrative sequence. Bayer's music from *Die Puppenfee* has about as much substance as cotton candy. To the extent that the strings are predominant throughout, the dramatics subdued, and the dynamics nicely cushioned, this record would be perfect for a restaurant where the dinner patrons have tired of *Caprice Viennois*.

—A.K.

Music of the Bach Family: Choral works: *Unser Leben ist ein Schatten* (Johann Bach); *Ich danke dir, Gott* (Heinrich Bach); *Siehe, wie fein und lieblich* (Georg Christoph Bach); *Es erhub sich ein Streit* (Johann Christoph Bach); *Herr, ich warte auf dein Heil* (Johann Michael Bach); *In Jena geht es wunderbarlich* (Johann Nicolaus Bach); *Es danken dir, Gott* (Johann Ludwig Bach); *Drum Welt, ade* (Johann Ludwig Bach); *Psalms VI—3 movements* (Johann Ernst Bach); Marguerite Willauer (soprano); Betty Lou Allen (mezzo-soprano); David Lloyd (tenor); McHenry Boatwright (basso); Boston University Chorus and Zimble Sinfonietta conducted by Richard Burgin; Allan Lannom (choral director). Boston Stereo BST-1008, \$5.95.

⑧SEVERAL years ago Boston Records

issued a four-disc set constituting a complete recording of Geiringer's anthology, *Music of the Bach Family*. For the present issue the various choral works from that set have been gathered together on one disc. And now this wonderful music is presented in stereophonic sound. The monophonic version impressed me as being decidedly a "close" recording; especially the solo singers were dominant, though chorus and orchestra were full and clear. Now all that is changed. There is a feeling of spaciousness as in a large hall; the orchestra still sounds strong, but the soloists are removed to a point sufficiently distant to lose the strong impression of their individualities, and sometimes of the clarity of the lines they sing. The chorus comes off better.

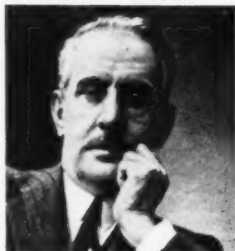
The music is completely lovely. *Unser Leben ist ein Schatten*, by Johann Sebastian's great-uncle whose name was simply Johann, is a very graphic setting of the text—*Our life is a shadow*—with a wonderful diminishing each time the voices sing the little ascending run on the word *Schatten*, and a fading effect at the end. *Siehe, wie fein und lieblich*, by Georg Christoph (Johann Sebastian's uncle) has a beautiful introduction featuring three gambas, and *Es erhub sich ein Streit* by Johann Christoph (a cousin once removed) is a magnificent study in the possibilities of the C major chord. *Herr, ich warte auf dein Heil*, by Johann Michael (Johann Christoph's brother), built around a chorale melody, works up to an exciting climax. There is even a bit of comedy

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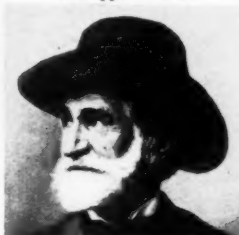
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called *In Jena geht es wunderbar* By Johann Nicolaus (Johann Christoph's son). But there is not a single piece on this program for which one hearing will suffice. It opens up a repertory that should by no means be missed. —P.L.M.

•
J. S. BACH: *Violin Concerto in A minor* (BWV 1041); *Violin Concerto in E* (BWV 1042); Yehudi Menuhin, soloist and conducting the Robert Masters Chamber Orchestra; *Concerto for Two Violins in D minor* (BWV 1043); Yehudi Menuhin and Christian Ferras (violins); Festival Chamber Orchestra conducted by Mr. Menuhin. Capitol Stereo SG-7210, \$5.98.

I Musici.....Epic BC-1018
⑧THE fecundity of the recording industry has never permitted me long-term enjoyment of any one performance of this traditional omnibus. Dealing only with recent history: first I received the now-discontinued Redel (Ducretet DTL-93067) with great enthusiasm; next came I Musici to usurp Redel with their particular brand of elegance. Now we have a new version which is infinitely superior to either of its fine predecessors. This is Menuhin at his rarely-heard best, which means in a class with a very select few. Not only is his solo work superb, but also his conducting is far ahead of all competition.

There is no denying this musician's fantastic unpredictability. In the Feb. ARG, A.K. took some lusty critical thwacks at his grotesque soloing in the Kurtz *Swan Lake*. But in this recording the tone is always magnificently apt, never romantically heavy with strong vibrato, or Teutonic with the jejune purity thereby implied. The fast movements are all executed with stunning brilliance and perfectly sustained forward motion. Those expecting problems in the slow movements need not be troubled. The expected glissandi, nuances, etc., never appear. The playing is always sharp and to the musical point. These sections are moving to a degree that I have not previously experienced. In the "Double" Concerto, a very slight edginess on Menuhin's part in the outer movements serves as the ideal com-

plement to the naturally darker tones of Ferras, whose playing is also splendid. For an over-all interpretation of such conviction and excitement of the D minor one would have to go back to the ancient 78s of Szigeti, Flesch, and Goehr.

The pacing is ideal, lying between Redel's headlong dash and I Musici's leisurely tempi. The inflections are closer to Redel's sharpness, with the Italians sounding under-emphatic by comparison. The entire recital, however, displays an interpretative strength which Redel and his friends could not hope to match.

Menuhin's ideas of balance between soli and tutti are, surprisingly, closer to Redel's concerto grosso conception than to I Musici's more obvious favoring of the solos, although the string group (both, by the way, are terrific) does fade into the background a bit during the opening of the Double and the finale of the E major. The stereo sound is well-balanced with the harpsichord continuo in its proper aural perspective; the surfaces are silent. I could go on for several more pages. I think, however, that I have adequately expressed the opinion that these are definitely the performances to own. I don't think they'll be readily surpassed. —H.G.

•
J. S. BACH: *Concerto No. 5 in F Minor for Clavier and Strings*; **HANDEL:** *Concerto Grosso No. 12 in B minor, Op. 6*; **MOZART:** *Adagio and Fugue in C minor, K. 546*; Maria Teresa Garatti (piano, in the Bach); I Musici. Epic LC-3644, \$4.98.

(Bach)
E. Fischer (piano).....Angel COLH-15
Fos (piano).....Decca DL-9601
Heiler (harpsichord).....Bach Guild BG-588
Wood (harpsichord).....Forum F-70005
(Handel)
Neel.....London A-4311
Redel.....Vox 10043
(Mozart)
Klemperer.....Angel 35401

▲ALTHOUGH the jacket does not state it, the Bach is played on the piano rather than on the harpsichord. It is, however, a very satisfactory performance—the best, as a matter of fact, on the record. The Handel is less pleasing simply because of lack of attention to stylistic details. One must deplore the unimaginative continuo, incorrect execution of trills, and generally

stolid approach, although the tone quality of the string ensemble is very rich and full. The Mozart is played rather slowly in both the *Adagio* and the *Fugue*, with the former sounding extremely lax. The hard-driven Klemperer reading is much more stylistically correct—this is a dynamic piece; the nervous tension must be felt. The sound of the strings is very good and, as usual with I Musici, their ensemble is admirable. —I.K.

BEETHOVEN: *Violin Concerto in D*; David Oistrakh (violin) with French National Radio Orchestra conducted by André Cluytens. Angel Stereo S-35780, \$5.98.

Heifetz.....RCA LSC-1992
Stern.....Col. MS-6093
⑤OISTRAKH'S lovely tone, his meticulous attention to detail, the capable support of Cluytens, and Angel's hearty sonics yield the listener concerned with musical nourishment less than you might imagine. In short supply is the breadth and intensity of expression, the ruggedness of style that would have made the performance memorable. Accompanying this disc is a bonus record which samples eight current Angel releases. —C.J.L.

BEETHOVEN: *Missa solemnis in D, Op. 123*; Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano); Christa Ludwig (contralto); Nicolai Gedda (tenor); Nicola Zaccaria (basso); Chorus of the Society of the Friends of Music in Vienna (Reinhold Schmitt, chorus master) and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. Angel Stereo set S-3595, four sides, \$11.96.

Böhm.....Decca DX-135
Klemperer.....Vox 11430
Toscanini.....RCA LM 6013

⑤THE most successful of the previous recordings of the *Missa Solemnis*, weigh-

ing the merits of both performance and reproduction, is to my mind that of Karl Böhm, but it has not appeared on stereo, which gives this new one a definite edge to start with. Aside from that, there were some loose ends in the Böhm version which had to do mostly, I suspect, with inadequate preparation, and I find no evidence of that here. The quartet is individually and collectively more than adequate, nicely in balance and thoroughly in command. The singers are so placed that they do not dominate the chorus and orchestra, but maintain a natural relationship with the total forces. The chorus also is well placed for clarity and balance. The terrific difficulties Beethoven has set for his performers are overcome as well as they are ever likely to be. The *Benedictus* flows its serene way with vocal beauty and expressiveness, and the solo violin is not only well played but properly reproduced. So too with the *Agnus Dei*, which makes a fitting crown for the work. It will not be easy for any rival recording to supersede this one. —P.L.M.

BRAHMS: *Ver ernste Gesänge, Op. 121*; **SCHUBERT:** *Gesänge des Harfners, Op. 12*; **WOLF:** *Michelangelo Lieder*; Kim Borg (basso) and Erik Werba (piano). Decca/Deutsche Grammophon Stereo GDS-712023, \$5.98.

⑤THOUGH this can hardly be called a cheerful program it is a profoundly beautiful and satisfying one. Borg is a singer who feels his songs and communicates to the listener. His is not an exceptional voice in itself; indeed, at times the limitations of his instrument are quite apparent. Yet we are left with the feeling that we have really heard the songs, and this is the thing for which every lieder singer must strive. His sensitive

Stern's Beethoven: very highly recommended

BEETHOVEN: *Violin Concerto in D, Op. 61*; Isaac Stern (violin) with the New York Philharmonic conducted by Leonard Bernstein. Columbia ML-5415, \$4.98.

⑤STERN'S faultless performance (which

utilizes the Kreisler cadenzas) is an inspiring example of the highest violinistic art throughout. Bernstein's support is on the devoted level. The fine engineering sets it all off in fine balance and focus. Very highly recommended. —A.K.

performance of the *Ernste Gesänge* ranks easily among the best as yet recorded; the moods are caught and sustained, the words thoughtfully and impressively pronounced. The Schubert set offers more vocal problems despite the fact that the songs are more limited in range. The high-ending phrase *Ihr himmlischen Mächte* is difficult to sing, and I am afraid it sounds so. The ending of the first Wolf song again gives the impression of not being easy, but for the rest these wonderful pieces are beautifully done. I was especially struck by Borg's crescendo at *Und nun sind wir leblos hier* and his handling of the word *Ein Traumgesicht*. This is the singing of a very fine artist.

—P.L.M.

BUXTEHUDE: *Preludes and Fugues in C Major (Hedra Edition, Vol. II, No. 2), A Minor (II/4), A Minor (II/5), A Minor (II/6) (Phrygian), G Major (II/7), E Minor (II/9), E Minor (II/10), Fugue in C Major (II/3).* Alf Linder at the organ of Varfrukyrka in Skänninge, Sweden. Westminster XWN-18777, \$4.98.

▲MUSICALLY one of the most satisfying volumes in the series (it is No. 7), this will also tickle those hearing buds stimulated only by strong virtuosic impulses. Not that there isn't the occasional boggy fugue to be traversed, but even these are generally saved by Linder's subtle phrasing and registration. Also shown are some of this artist's characteristic extremes—the E minor Fugue (Hedra Edition Volume II, No. 9) in particular comes out clipped and jagged in an antiquely cumbersome, though not unattractive, stylization. Comparison with more catholic recitalists is pinpointed in his fleet and flutey Fugue in C (II/3). Those whose showmanship is uncomfortable in Buxtehude's rather arid presence (Clarence Snyder, for instance, on Word 4003) usually destroy the light graces of this popular work by trying to make each entrance ever bigger and better in a lush network of over-registration, complete with a finale of heavy pedal reeds and 32's! Finally, there is much to pique one's fancy in those curious touches

peculiar to Buxtehude alone. Who does not relish the jazzily syncopated little subject in the C major Fugue (II/2) followed in due course by a "flight-of-angels" type of elaboration, or the unprepared explosions of the Fugue in E minor (II/10)? This set abounds in such exotic elements. The engineering is extremely good.

—J.B.L.

CHOPIN: *The Four Ballades;* Artur Rubinstein (piano). RCA Victor LM-2370, \$4.98, or Stereo LSC-2370, \$5.98.

CHOPIN: *The Four Scherzi;* Artur Rubinstein (piano); RCA Victor LM-2368, \$4.98, or Stereo LSC-2368, \$5.98.

⑤RUBINSTEIN's latest recordings again confirm that the pianist is at the height of his powers. His playing here is quite remarkable; these eight pieces, among the finest of Chopin's works, are executed with a sense of style, poetry, and bravura that are incomparable on records today. Amazingly enough, Rubinstein has never before recorded any of the Ballades. One feels, however, that their interpretation here is the result of a lifetime of playing, perhaps even more so than with any of Rubinstein's other great performances. Their depth and maturity are completely unparalleled, as is the case also with his Scherzi. The pianist first did the Scherzi in the early thirties; he re-recorded them for LP, and that version (for some inexplicable reason no mention of this second recording is made in the liner notes) was released in 1951 (LM-1132). The latter performance was not entirely satisfactory, for Rubinstein's Scherzi then seemed much too frenetic—poetry was subordinated to a kind of tense bravura. This third version is ideal: bravura is here in abundance, but along with it there is also repose. Perhaps one attribute is felt more strongly than all the others in Rubinstein's playing of both the Ballades and the Scherzi—there is a tremendous *unity* to each of these eight works. Rather than a series of disconnected passages, an effect heard far too often from many pianists, each individual piece becomes an entity in Rubinstein's performance. The piano sound is not entirely ideal but is better than in most of the pianist's discs. In

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sum, these are great interpretations and are most highly recommended. —I.K.

•
DEBUSSY: *Le Martyre de Saint Sébastien*; Suzanne Danco (soprano), Nancy Wough and Lise de Montmollin (contraltos), Union Chorale de la Tour-de-Peilz, L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. London Stereo OSA-1104, \$5.98.

Munch, Boston Sym. RCA LM-2030
⑧IT is a great pleasure to have an up-to-date version of this marvelous score without being forced to extricate much of the music from behind the recitation (by M. Munch) of d'Annunzio's murky text—a factor working against greater enjoyment of the Victor presentation. However, Ansermet's is also the more satisfying from a purely interpretative point of view. Munch's conducting is brilliant and forceful, at times too much so. Ansermet allows the music to unfold more gently. As a result, his climaxes seem all the more powerful. Danco gives one of her most ravishing displays of vocal technique on records, considerably outclassing her completely acceptable rival, Phyllis Curtin. London's contraltos produce cleaner ensemble tones than their competitors, Akos and Kopleff—although the latter is probably the best of the four in her solo lines. Ansermet's chorus is far more polished and appealing in sound than the New England Conservatory group. While comparing the two versions it became evident to me that Munch was trying to make us aware of more of the literal content of the play than was feasible for a single record. Munch's performance seems to constitute that conductor-recitateur's apology for not giving us the entire drama with its "incidental music". For Ansermet, the music is more of a separate entity and this is undoubtedly one of the chief reasons for his great success. The stereo effects are successfully accomplished; however, the great sonic advantage this disc has over its monophonic counterpart (A-4103) is the elimination of the surface noise mentioned by P.L.M. in his original review in the June, 1955 issue. In short, this is a flawless performance which no admirer of Debussy can afford to miss. —H.G.

DONIZETTI: *"L'Elisir d'Amore"*; Rosanna Carteri (Adina); Luigi Alva (Nemorino); Rolando Panerai (Belcore); Giuseppe Taddei (Dulcamara); Angela Vercelli (Giannetta); La Scala Chorus and Orchestra, Milan, conducted by Tullio Serafin. Angel Stereo set 3594 B/L, four sides, \$12.96.

Gueden, di Stefano, Corena London 1311
Noni, Valletti, Bruscantini, (Mono) Cetra 1235
⑧THIS is a spirited performance, kept nicely in hand by Maestro Serafin, who perhaps better than anyone else practicing today knows how to make Donizetti sound his best. Unfortunately, however, the generally fine cast is not ideal, and I am afraid I am left preferring the London set featuring Gueden and Di Stefano. The weak spot in the cast is Miss Carteri, whose voice is too spread and shrill, her execution too lacking in neatness to present a credible Adina. Angelina Vercelli, in the minor role of Giannetta, shows up to better advantage. Luigi Alva has a very light tenor voice, somewhat limited in color as well as power. But he has a head on his shoulders, and his singing is always tasteful and musical. Panerai is an excellent Belcore, rich in voice and not lacking in the right kind of deadpan humor. And Taddei is capital as Dulcamara. These are strong points indeed, but they hardly balance the miscast heroine. Angel's engineering is excellent, with enough stereo separation to make for an exciting sense of "presence". —P.L.M.

•
FRANCK: *Symphony in D minor; Psyché et Eros*; Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Carlo Maria Giulini. Angel Stereo S-35641, \$5.98.

⑧GIULINI'S special understanding of the romantic idiom is nowhere else more potently evident. This is, for my tastes, the finest performance of the Franck Symphony on records since the Monteux-San Francisco collaboration many years ago: richly colored, intense, and movingly nostalgic. Giulini makes all his points with telling effect. The sensual meeting of Psyché and Eros is no less effectively depicted. The engineers have responded as if they knew that they were recording something special. —A.K.

Four by Foster

FOSTER: *O Lemuel; The Glandy Burke; Old folks at home; Old black Joe; Katy Bell; Jeanie with the light brown hair; Open thy lattice, love; Angelina Baker; Ring de banjo; Oh! Susannah; Some folks do; Beautiful dreamer; Massa's in de cold, cold ground; Gentle Annie; Sweetly she sleeps, my Alice fair; Nelly Bly; De Camptown races; Old Uncle Ned; My old Kentucky home; John Gart at the Conn Electronic Organ, with The Southlanders.* Kapp KL-1140, \$3.98, or Stereo KL-1140-S, \$4.98.

FOSTER: *Swanee River; I dream of Jeanie with the light brown hair; Oh! Susannah; Gentle Annie; Open thy lattice, love; Come where my love lies dreaming; My old Kentucky home; Old black Joe; Camptown races; Beautiful dreamer; Our bright summer days are gone; Beautiful child of song; Laura Lee; The Stephen Foster Carillon (Actually recorded on the Deagan Carillon at the Stephen Foster Memorial, White Springs, Florida; June Albright, carillonneur).* Decca DL-78923, \$4.98.

⑤THE durability of the Stephen Foster melodies is daily attested by the multifarious forms and arrangements in which they crop up. For a half dozen or so of the songs the words are so well known that each listener to any kind of an instrumental performance can hardly help supplying them for himself. In some of the others it doesn't matter, as the tunes are the important thing. The first of these two collections rings the changes on the old favorites and some less familiar with all the resources of the electronic organ assisted by appropriate obbligato instruments. John Gart, who presides at the console, spices up the harmonies and makes liberal use of such devices as the glissando. He is recorded with great realism. The second program is simpler in its conception. The recording, it seems, was made at dawn, the quietest hour possible, but the planners of the program reckoned without the birds and the crickets. Awakened by the music of the carillon, these creatures set up a chorus

which became a feature of the record. The Deagan Carillon, in its two-hundred-foot tower, is described on the jacket as "the world's largest set of tubular bells which may be played either manually or automatically". —P.L.M.

•
FOSTER: *Ring de Banjo; Beautiful dreamer; Gentle Annie; Way down in Ca-i-ro; My old Kentucky home; Old Black Joe; Dolcy Jones; Thou art the queen of my song; Old folks at home; Come where my love lies dreaming; Oh! Susanna; Gentle Lena Clare; Nelly Bly; Laura Lee; Camptown Races; The Robert Shaw Chorale, conducted by Robert Shaw.* RCA Victor LM-2295, \$4.98, or Stereo LSC-2295, \$5.98.

⑤THESE simple and effective arrangements are by Mrs. Shaw and Alice Parker. There are incidental solos in the program by Grant Williams and James Wainner, tenors, Thomas Pyle, baritone, and Louise Natale, soprano. Accompanying the record is a booklet with all the songs arranged for home performance by Skitch Henderson, but these are simplified almost beyond all recognition, which is no small achievement when the originals are the unpretentious Foster songs. The chorus sings with its customary blend of vitality and polish, and the soloists are fine indeed, and so is the sound. —P.L.M.

•
FOSTER: *De Camptown Races; My Old Kentucky Home; Old Black Joe; Old Dog Tray; Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground; Oh! Susanna; Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair; Old Folks at Home; Come where my Love Lies Dreaming; Lou Raderman (violin) and Capitol Symphony Orchestra conducted by Carmen Dragon.* Capitol Stereo SP-8501, \$4.98.

⑤DRAGON has left no rich or colorful combination untried in orchestrating these Foster songs, nor has he neglected special effects, such as the whinnying of horses in *Camptown Races*. The tunes are all here, now grave, now gay, polished and shining in a way Stephen Foster hardly could have conceived. There is unquestionably a vast public for this kind of program. —P.L.M.

GLAZUNOV: *Symphony No. 4 in E flat, Op. 48*; **BALAKIREV:** *Overture on Themes of Russian Folksongs*; Kansas City Philharmonic conducted by Hans Schwieger. Urania Stereo USD-1031, \$5.95.

⑧THE Fourth Symphony is a pleasant if unmemorable lyric collage from the fading heyday of the "Russian National School". It is also a prime example of first-rate technique at the service of second-rate *thématique*. This, of course, produces a wandering effect. Great waves of filler crescendo either to nothing, so that we seem to have a series of introductions to introductions, or to a theme of insufficient strength to merit such a buildup. The Balakirev sports some indigenously compelling variations on the same folk song Tchaikovsky used as the second theme in the finale of his Fourth Symphony. Schwieger is firm and sympathetic, and the sound of the Kansas City orchestra is by no means provincial. Clean, realistic engineering. —J.B.L.

●
GLUCK: "*Der betrogene Kadi*"; Ruth Nixa (Fatime); Zdenka Djeri (Zelmire); Elisabeth Schönaauer (Omega); Richard van Vrooman (Nuradin); Wladimir Smid-Kowar (Omar); Hans von Welz (Kadi); Camerata Academia des Salzburger Mozarteums, conducted by Bernard Paumgartner. Epic LC-3645, \$4.98.

▲IN mid-eighteenth-century Vienna there was a vogue for French plays and comic operas. Gluck, who had yet to find himself as the great reformer, contributed rather generously to the fad. Thus it was that his "*Le Cadi dupe*" came into being; it first saw the light in December 1761, a little less than a year (believe it or not!) before "*Orfeo ed Euridice*". We have it here done into German and produced by an apparently youthful group of singers. It cannot in all honesty be said that this score adds greatly to the stature of the composer as we know him. Its tunes are bright and melodious in the pseudo-Turkish spirit of the time, not infrequently bearing strong resemblance to better known music. Not one of them stands out as particularly striking. The recorded

performance includes the dialogue.

—P.L.M.

■
GOUNOD: "*Faust*"; Victoria de los Angeles (Marguerite); Nicolai Gedda (Faust); Boris Christoff (Mephistopheles); Ernest Blanc (Valentin); Liliane Berton (Siebel); Rita Gorr (Martha); Victor Autran (Wagner); Paris Opéra Chorus and Orchestra, conducted by André Cluytens (recorded September 23-October 9, 1958). Capitol Stereo set SGDR-7154, eight sides, \$23.92.

⑤LEST there be any confusion between this and the earlier RCA Victor set featuring the same conductor and three principals, Capitol is careful to supply the date of this recording. There was so much that was good about the old set that I hoped for an improvement in the new; I am afraid we must still wait for a fully satisfactory "*Faust*". But we must be grateful for what we have. Victoria de los Angeles may not be the most brilliant Marguerite in history; it is her nature to sing lyrically rather than dazzlingly. One is moved by the loveliness of her tone and the simple sincerity of her delivery. Her *Jewel Song* is deliberately paced, but it has a lilt. And she rises rapturously to that finest moment in Marguerite's music—the end of the Garden Scene, *Il m'aime*. Gedda has gained since the older set was made and here he sings his best. Few tenors today can approach his robust lyricism. His high C in *Salut, demeure* is strong and solid. Perhaps a degree or two of added warmth would make his singing even better, but I am content to accept it as it is. The great blot on the performance is the Christoff Mephistopheles. How so un-French a conception, such impossibly bad delivery of the language, can pass muster in Paris I do not understand. As Valentin Borthayre of the old set is replaced by Blanc, whose voice has a kind of huskiness that makes for good characterization in this not too colorful part. Berton replaces Angelici as Siebel, singing in an attractively fresh young voice if not quite all the appeal of her predecessor. Rita Gorr (whose opposite number was Solange Michel) is perhaps the richest-

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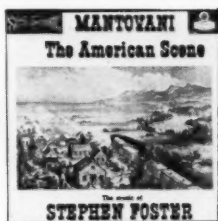
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voiced Martha of recent years. The quartet in the Garden Scene benefits greatly thereby. Definitely this Martha is a person. Autran does all that could be done with the lines of Wagner. The performance contains about all we ever hear of the score, omitting as is customary the scene where the deserted Marguerite sings at her spinning wheel the French equivalent (more or less) of *Meine Ruh' ist hin*. The ballet is included. Regretfully, I must end by reporting that I found considerable distortion in the stereo sound. —P.L.M.

•
GRIEG: *Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16*; **SCHUMANN:** *Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 54*; Solomon (piano); Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert Menges. Capitol-EMI Stereo SG-7191, \$5.98.

⑧IN stereo the present readings are the finest available. By comparison with monophonic interpretations, Solomon's noble and infinitely musical conception ranks along with Dinu Lipatti's great recording (Columbia ML-4525) in almost all respects. Solomon's warm playing of the Schumann is remarkably poetic as well as being robust; this is a style of Schumann interpretation rarely encountered today. If the Grieg is a little less satisfying, it is only because of Lipatti's memorable reading, which achieves a certain musical naturalness just missed by the British pianist. Criticism of this kind, however, is carping, for Solomon's is really a very beautiful performance indeed, and it becomes tremendously exciting in the finale. This disc seems to have been one of the last recordings made by Solomon before his stroke several years ago. Let us hope that he soon will be able to play again; few pianists have his abilities. The sound of the orchestra is slightly distant, with a somewhat shallow and not overly full piano tone. The stereo is effective but without too much separation. Recommended. —I.K.

•
M. HAYDN: *String Quintets in C and G*; Roth String Quartet. Society for Forgotten Music SFM-1005, \$4.98, or Stereo SFM-S-2005, \$5.95.

⑧THOUGH Michael's natural bent was

for church music, he ventured occasionally into what he must have felt to be primarily his brother's province, and these two examples of his chamber music style indicate a well developed, if not especially original, talent. Yet even on the point of originality we must not underestimate him, for Papa Mozart, who disliked Michael, wrote Wolfgang that Herr Haydn was a composer "whose merit you will be forced to acknowledge". And Mozart did acknowledge it to the extent of reworking his own B flat Quintet after he heard Michael's C major one, in 1773. And the C major does, in fact, contain one of the best movements on this record, to my ear: the *Adagio cantabile* in which violin and viola carry on an enchanting conversation *tête-à-tête* over the rather lazy pizzicato of the rest of the group. The finales of these works are tantalizing and a little disappointing—the players pull up to the bare edge of what promises to be a real polyphonic workout, and then retreat in all innocence to simple tunefulness again. The Roth Quartet plays musically, of course, if rather solemnly for this music. The recorded sound is somewhat dry and unresonant. —S.F.

•
HAYDN: *Die Schöpfung*; Mimi Coertse (soprano); Julius Patzak (tenor); Deszö Ernster (basso); Singverein der Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Wien, and Orchester der Wiener Volksoper conducted by Jascha Horenstein. Vox set PL-11452, four sides, \$9.96.

Markevitch.....Decca DX-138
Woldike.....Vanguard 471-72

▲THOUGH this is the first *Creation* to appear in stereo, it is here reviewed from the monophonic pressing. My suspicion is that the recording was produced in a hurry, for the performance does not sound carefully rehearsed and the reproduction is nothing extra. Horenstein's tempi are inclined to be deliberate, the beat thumped out. *Die Himmel erzählen* (*The Heavens are telling*) is slow and plodding. Of the soloists by far the best work is done by the soprano, whose voice is now at full bloom and really quite lovely. Patzak, who appears for the second time in a recording of the work, is now sixty-two; he retains a remarkable quantity of voice, though I

am afraid the quality is no longer what it once was. But in the trio portion of *Die Himmel erzählen* his singing is so restrained that we can hardly hear him. Ernster is likewise past his best days vocally, and hardly makes up in style for the unsteadiness of his production. All in all, I find little to admire in this performance, especially as I compare it with the two older recordings still listed in Schwann. Wöldike's is an excellent set, Markevitch's an inspired one. —P.L.M.

LEONCAVALLO: "*I Pagliacci*"; Mario Del Monaco (Canio); Gabriella Tucci (Nedda); Cornell MacNeil (Tonio); Renato Capecchi (Silvio); Piero de Palma (Beppe); Chorus and Orchestra of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Rome, conducted by Francesco Molinari-Pradelli. **Italian Song Recital:** *Trobadoriga* (Cinque); *'Na sera 'e maggio* (Cioffi); *O sole mio* (Di Capua); *Tu ca' non chagne* (De Vurtis); *Varca d' 'o primo amore* (Mainardi); *Granada* (Lara); Mario Del Monaco (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Ernesto Nicelli. London Stereo set OSA-1212, four sides, \$11.96.

⑤WE are now in the period when everything that has been done must be done again, if only the public has shown appreciation. Del Monaco, perhaps the most popular Canio of the day, seems also to be the first on stereo. He is, however, working with a new cast, and the former conductor, Erede, has given place to Molinari-Pradelli. I am afraid that, for all its realistic stage effects, this turns out to be just another "*Pagliacci*" by a thoroughly routinized and competent company, without the touch of real distinction. Del Monaco is not in his best form: his singing at the first is rather labored and uncertain in intonation, though he catches up with himself to some extent later. His *Vesti la giubba* is marred by a good deal of sliding around in the name of legato. If memory serves he was better in the older performance. The best singing in the set is done by Cornell MacNeil, who leads off with an excellent *prolog* and sustains his character through the drama that follows. Renato Capecchi, the Silvio,

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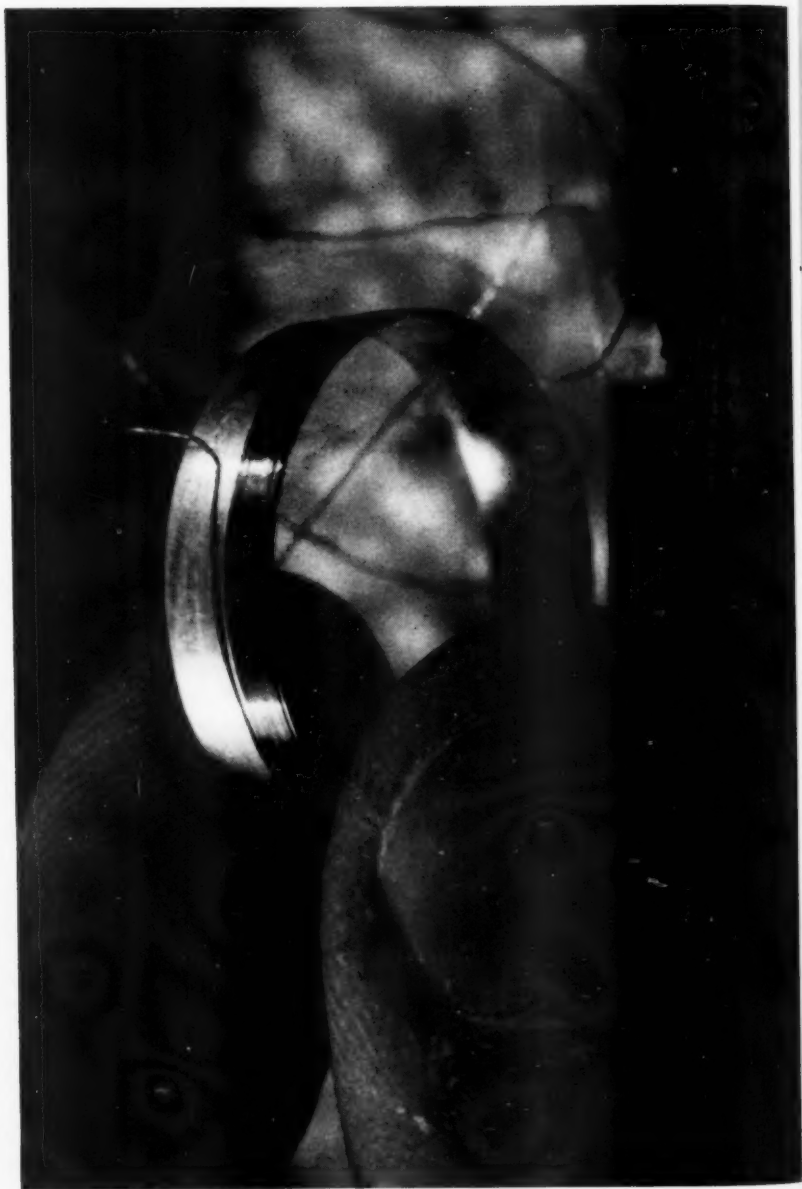
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also contributes a convincing characterization and de Palma is a satisfactory Beppe. But I found Miss Tucci disappointing; for all her attractive voice she never seems inspired. Her *Ballatella* moves along at a pedestrian tempo, though of course this may not be her fault. Incidentally, she omits the two trills that lead into the aria. The Italian recital on the odd side is made up of songs of the Neapolitan type, including *O sole mio*, all sung at the top of the Del Monaco voice—and that top is pretty high. —P.L.M.

MOORE: *The Pageant of P. T. Barnum*; **PISTON:** *The Incredible Flutist*; Eastman-Rochester Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. Mercury Stereo SR-90206, \$5.95.

(*Incredible Flutist*)
Fiedler, Boston Pops (mono)...RCA Vic. LM-2084

⑤THE Moore Suite is in five sections: Boyhood at Bethel; Joice Heth—161 Year Old Negress; General and Mrs. Tom Thumb; Jenny Lind; and Circus Parade. The writing is in the folksong-Americana vein that the headings suggest, making no demands whatever on the listener's harmonic sensitivities or his deeper emotions. The intent is purely atmospheric, and in this Moore succeeds very well indeed. This is a first recording. Piston's familiar ballet suite makes a perfect disc.



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mate. Neither composer could ask for more persuasive representation than Hanson and the Eastman-Rochester ensemble provide. The strings are on the close side in the Piston, but otherwise the reproductions are excellent. —A.K.

•
MOZART: *Serenade No. 11 in E flat, K. 375, for Winds; Serenade No. 12 in C minor, K. 388, for Winds;* Everest Woodwind Octet conducted by Newell Jenkins. Everest LPBR-6042 or Stereo SDBR-3042, \$4.40.

Kell Chamber Orch.....Decca DL-9540
 Vienna Phil. Wind Gp...Westminster XWN-18134

⑧BOTH of these marvelous works receive very capable readings, with the Serenade No. 12 being perhaps the more effectively performed. Generally, however, certain refinements and subtleties in phrasing are lacking, and this is most noticeable in the less dramatic but no less beautiful No. 11. Tempi are good, albeit somewhat on the slow side. More sparkle, as well as more stylistic elegance, can be heard in the version by the Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group, one of Westminster's earliest recordings; although a little dated sonically it is still extremely enjoyable. Incidentally, I question the short appoggiaturas at the beginning of the second *Menuetto* in the Serenade No. 11; these should be treated as long appoggiaturas. The sound is extremely clear and bright, not so mellow as the Westminster version, but very lifelike. Stereo effects are unexaggerated with excellent balance among instruments. There is, however, some tape hiss on the stereo-disc. —I.K.

•
MOZART: *Serenade in E flat, K. 375;*
BEETHOVEN: *Octet in E flat, Op. 103;*
 Prague Woodwind Octet. Vanguard Stereo VSD-2043, \$5.98.

⑧THESE are healthy, extrovert performances that are winning in their enthusiasm. The players, however, fail from time to time to phrase sensitively, and the magic of several moments in the slow movement of the adorable Mozart Serenade is thereby lost. The engineering by Vanguard is the very model of what chamber recording ought to be. The sounds are enveloped in becoming spaciousness, but they are

sharply defined so that maximum detail comes through.

—C.J.L.

MOZART: *Symphony No. 10 in G, K.74; Symphony No. 11 in D, K. 84; Symphony No. 12 in G, K. 110; Symphony No. 13 in F, K. 112*; Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. Westminster XWN-18663, \$4.98.

MOZART: *Symphony No. 14 in A, K. 114; Symphony No. 15 in G, K. 124; Symphony No. 16 in C, K. 128; Symphony No. 17 in G, K. 129*; Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. Westminster Stereo WST-14078, \$5.98.

ⒺALTHOUGH the final installment in this praiseworthy series has been announced and is already listed in Schwann,

it has not been released as yet. The works here are products of Mozart's fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth years. Taken as a whole they are, of course, embryonic in comparison to the composer's later development, but there is much of charm and inventiveness; one has the feeling that he is discovering Mozart all over again. The unfamiliar beauty of such gems as the Twelfth, Thirteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Symphonies cause one to wonder at the lack of interest and enterprise on the part of conductors. One hopes that Leinsdorf's buoyant readings will help to prove that *early* Mozart has something to offer, too. The engineers' efforts to create a salon-like atmosphere meets with better success in stereo than in mono, where it is at times just a shade too close. —A.K.

Fischer-Dieskau as Don Giovanni

CHIEF interest in this latest "*Don Giovanni*" centers around the assumption of the title role by Fischer-Dieskau: we have had nothing of this kind from him before. Yet it is impossible to judge him individually, so much is he a part of the performance as a whole. This is a thoroughly Germanic interpretation with a set of values unlike those of the various previous recordings. One could take exception to the delivery of Da Ponte's text by virtually all the cast, and this is something that goes beyond the inevitable mispronunciation of such

words as *questa* and *qui*. Not that anyone speaks his words particularly badly; but hardly anyone succeeds in sounding quite at home. The chief result is that we miss a note of elegance in the recitatives; they are all a bit heavy even when they move most quickly. The singing of Jurinac and Stader is more forcefully dramatic than genuinely Italian singers would be, though on the other hand they never stray from the paths of good taste. Jurinac, who was more appropriately cast as Donna Elvira in the Epic set, is as always a fine singer, but hers is not the type of voice we associate with Donna Anna. Stader, on the other hand, is convincing as Elvira, though one can hardly imagine her being so in the theatre. Though Seefried's voice has deepened in recent years she is still an appealing Zerlina, and Sardi makes a good Masetto to companion her. It was inevitable that Fischer-Dieskau would sing his music well; his mind as well as his voice is always at work. Being a genuine baritone, he has no trouble with the *Serenade*, which is difficult for some other famous Dons. Kohn's Leporello seems to me rather tame and lacking in profile. One is grateful that the humor is

MOZART: "*Don Giovanni*"; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (Don Giovanni); Karl Kohn (Leporello); Walter Kreppel (Il Commendatore); Sena Jurinac (Donna Anna); Maria Stader (Donna Elvira); Irmgard Seefried (Zerlina); Ernst Häfliger (Don Ottavio); Ivan Sardi (Masetto); RIAS Chamber Choir; Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. Deutsche Grammophon Stereo set DGSO-7302, six sides, \$17.94.

Krips.....London A-4406
Moralt.....Epic SC-6010
Rudolf.....Cetra 1253

not overdone, but one could do with a little more of it. This way there is not enough contrast between the Don and his gentleman's gentleman. Häfíger's Don Ottavio is more virile than most, but by the same token his voice lacks the grace to do full justice to the two arias, especially *Dalla sua pace*. Kreppel is an excellent Commendatore. The recording is generally very satisfactory, and much is made in the stereo version of the stage illusion. Not only do we get the impression of a good wide podium, but the singers move about the stage. Much is made, too, of the separation of voices in the big ensembles, perhaps nowhere more beautifully than in *Proteggia il giusto cielo*.

There are always a number of ways to interpret a masterpiece, and Friscay's way is interesting in itself. But whether it can take its place in anyone's affections with the best recordings of "*Don Giovanni*" is another question and an extremely personal one. —P.L.M.

●
PROKOFIEV: *Violin Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 63*; **MOZART:** *Violin Concerto No. 3 in G, K. 216*; David Oistrakh (violin); Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera. Angel Stereo S-35714, \$5.98.

PROKOFIEV: *Violin Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 63*; **MENDELSSOHN:** *Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64*; Jascha Heifetz (violin); Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Munch. RCA Victor LM-2314, \$4.98, or Stereo LSC-2314, \$5.98.

§ONLY after "much debate internal", as Gilbert put it, does this reviewer come to recommend Heifetz's Prokofiev over Oistrakh's, and the choice is not an easy one. Heifetz is biting, almost sardonic in the fast movements, more objective in the *Andante*; Oistrakh's tempos are consistently slower, and his attitude, while never lacking in energy, is more benevolent. The difference in the two approaches is not always great, but an extreme example occurs at the second theme in the finale: Heifetz tears into the strings with grating ferocity, bowing (if sound does not deceive) at the nut; Oistrakh chooses an entirely different coloring—remote, over-

cast, contemplative rather than aggressive. The fast movements benefit from Heifetz's fire. I think, and are the more exciting, but the problem of making a clear choice between the two recordings becomes even keener with the slow movement, for it is here that the music, under Oistrakh's loving touch, blossoms into a beauty well-nigh unmatchable. Both conductors, too, know what they are about and what the music is about, and Prokofiev's frequently enticing orchestration is dressed in its Sunday best by both the Boston and the Philharmonia. If anything is to tip the scales, then, it is Victor's superior sound, which brings each important orchestral instrument or section into sharp focus, while Angel's recording, which sets the solo violin farther away from the mike, tends to present the orchestra as a more massive whole. There may be listeners who prefer the smooth effect on Angel, but in favor of the Victor it should be said that the vividness is not overdone, and the individual parts do not shatter the unity of the orchestra as a whole. As to the reverse sides, Heifetz's Mendelssohn is brisk and sparkling, with a "let's get on with it" air which certainly does not offend me. Oistrakh's Mozart is played *con amore* with the slightest touch of portamento to warm up the opening theme. Persuasive performances, both. —S.F.

●
PROKOFIEV: *Lieutenant Kijé Suite*; **KODÁLY:** *Háry János Suite*; Dan Iordachescu (baritone, in Prokofiev); Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. Capitol Stereo SP-8508, \$5.98.

(Kodály).....Mercury 90132 ©
(Prokofiev).....
Reiner.....RCA Victor LSC-2150 ©

§WHAT gives this recording special interest is the original version of the *Lieutenant Kijé Suite* with a baritone soloist in the second and fourth movements (*Romance* and *Troika*). Although the work has been recorded previously with voice, this is the only version currently available, and it is a pleasure to report that the performance is quite delightful. Usually the saxophone is used in place of the baritone; here there is a

spirit missing in the more familiar treatment, and the music gains immensely. Iordachescu negotiates his difficult part fairly well, though he has trouble with the high notes. Leinsdorf conducts this marvelously witty score with great authority and brilliance—qualities which are also present in his "*Háry János*" Suite. He brings to each work a remarkable degree

of humor, and his interpretations may easily rank with the very best. This is exceptionally brilliant and dynamic conducting, and the recording supplements Leinsdorf perfectly. The orchestra is slightly distant, but the stereo effects are extremely well accomplished. All told, here is an outstanding release. Highly recommended. —I.K.

Prokofiev's *She-Devil*

By ALAN RICH

BY 1920 Prokofiev was already a world figure. He had enjoyed both scandal and success in Russia with, respectively, *Ala and Lolli* and the "Classical" Symphony, and was now engaged on a personal exodus that was to keep him from his native land for almost a decade. His first major opera, "*Love for Three Oranges*", was about to be mounted in Chicago, although its way was not too smoothly paved. That year he began work on "*The Flaming Angel*", to a libretto drawn from the novel of the mystical Russian poet Brussov. Six years later the score was completed. . . only to gather dust for almost three decades. At one time Chicago, Boston, Paris, and Berlin had bid for performance rights, and a vocal score appeared in the Peters catalogue in 1927, but no more was heard of the opera until the manuscript turned up in a Paris basement in 1952, whereupon it was, relatively

speaking, "rushed" into a première production at Venice in 1955.

External considerations of the work may condone this neglect, but certainly nothing in the music does. The major stumbling block is the leading female role; Renata is almost constantly on stage, and sings for about three-quarters of the opera's total length (a little over two hours). And how she must sing. . . violently dramatic, pathetically tender, earthy, mystic, the works! Amazing dramatic problems permeate every role down to the smallest. An enormous orchestra is required. Elaborate staging is called for. Not a work, in other words, for any old opera company on any old day. And yet, as this generally admirable recording amply proves, what we have here is one of the truly great works from Prokofiev's pen, and an extraordinarily vital piece of operatic craftsmanship.

The basic theme is the conflict of real and spiritual values in medieval Germany. Renata is a mystic; she believes to have consorted with the devil as a child, and longs for his reappearance to her as a "flaming angel" with whom her soul can unite. Ruprecht, a knight recently returned from America, where he has braved death at the hands of Indians, longs for her body to the extent that he willingly and patiently follows her on her search, only to be discarded when he impedes her progress. He falls in with Mephistopheles and Faust, while she brings her diabolical paraphernalia to a convent, bewitches the holy company, and is ordered finally to

PROKOFIEV: "*L'Ange de Feu*" ("*The Flaming Angel*"), *Opus 37*; Jane Rhodes (Renata); Xavier Depraz (Ruprecht); Irma Kolassi (Sorceress, Mother Superior); Janine Collard (Innkeeper); Jean Giraudeau (Mephistopheles); Paul Finel (Agrippa); André Vessières (Faust, Inquisitor); Gérard Friedmann (Glock, Doctor); Bernard Cottret (Waiter, Tavernkeeper, Mathieu); Claudy Mas-Michel and Janine Pieret (Nuns); RTF Chorus and Paris National Opera Orchestra conducted by Charles Bruck. Westminster set OPW-1304, six sides, \$14.94.

the stake. Prokofiev offers neither principal his mercy. Any sympathy we might feel for the hapless knight is banished by the grotesque, cold and ironic music that surrounds him. Renata's few moments of lucidity are mocked by offstage voices and apparitions. Only Faust, in his brief appearance in the fourth act, seems a being worthy of pity; we meet him at the moment when he is becoming bored and exasperated by Mephistopheles' juvenile pranks, and obviously regrets the whole bargain.

The sweep and impact of the opera are quite amazing. Prokofiev is evidently bent on proving that there is nothing beyond his powers. He unleashes from the opening chord an inexhaustible bag of orchestral and vocal tricks, and the sparks really fly. Too clever, perhaps? Unquestionably, but the icy fire of his dramatic conception is difficult to resist, and his "saint" is, after all, miles and centuries removed from Menotti's Bleeker Street.

Charles Bruck has worked hard on this performance, and has shaped a powerful testimonial to a remarkable score. From a somewhat larger and more proficient orchestra I might expect a little sharper attack here and there, but the balance is good and the sounds believable. Much is asked of the recording engineers, and they fall somewhat short of maintaining the absolute clarity of such moments as the final scene, but in general the focus is good. Mlle. Rhodes carries her enormous burden a good deal more than acceptably; she has her moments of shrillness, but who wouldn't? Depraz is a splendid Ruprecht, altogether moving and vocally at ease. Mme. Kolassi's brief bit as a sorceress is a pure delight. Vessières is a splendid Faust, but somewhat weak as the Inquisitor in the overpowering final scene. Other roles are sung with varying success, but none of them badly. On the whole I regard the set as memorable.

●
PROKOFIEV: *Symphony No. 7, Op. 131*; Czech Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by N. P. Anosov. Parliament PLP-122, \$1.98.

▲**BESET** somewhat by the accustomed bargain-rate ills—in this case, lack of

finesse in the strings and a tendency to take *mp* as *ff*. Anosov nevertheless conducts authoritatively, with flair, and generates some whopping accelerandos. The sound, too, is most lively. The main trouble is with the final *Vivace* of 24 measures which returns the last movement to its original key of D flat. Breathless over the preceding pianissimo in E, finished off nicely here with a gentle pizzicato for the strings which is not(!) in the score, we wait for this exciting return. But agape and akimbo, alas, for long seconds later we realize that the performance has ended *without* it! —J.B.L.

●
PUCCINI: "*Manon Lescaut*"; Maria Meneghini Callas (Manon); Giuseppe di Stefano (Des Grieux); Giulio Fioravante (Lescaut); Franco Calabrese (Geronte); Dino Formichini (Edmondo); Carlo Forti (L'Osta); Vito Tattone (Il Maestro di Ballo); Fiorenza Cossotto (Un Musico); Giuseppe Morresi (Un Sergente); Franco Ricciardi (Un Lampionaio); Franco Ventriglia (Un Comandante); La Scala Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Tullio Serafin. Angel set 3564, six sides, \$14.94.

Albanese, Bjoerling, RCA Victor LM-6116
Tebaldi, Del Monaco, London LLA-28
Petrolia, Campagnano, Cetra 1243

▲**VOCALLY** Miss Callas is at her recent best in this recording, and yet somehow I cannot hail it as one of her more notable achievements. As always she has carefully worked out her characterization, and there is outstanding intelligence in her vocal acting. But the Callas tone does not suggest the young Manon Lescaut. Perhaps she simply cannot fit herself into this rather shallow character. But there is much in her singing that is smooth and pleasing, and only a few high tones out of line. For his part, Di Stefano is in fine fettle, singing with firm and steady tone on the loud side perhaps, but this is hardly out of keeping with Puccini's score. Fioravante is a good Lescaut, and Calabrese, who took the same part in the RCA Victor set, a vocally rich and properly fatuous Geronte. The other singers are excellent, especially Formichini as Edmondo and Cossotto as the Singer. The recording, not yet issued in stereo, is of

the school that emphasizes the voices too much and has little to do with stage illusion. As such it is very good. Which leaves me still preferring the RCA Victor set, featuring Albanese, Bjoerling and Merrill and directed by Perlea. The singing is more convincing than here, and the exciting orchestral performance is caught in better balance. —P.L.M.

★
PUCCINI: "*Tosca*"; Renata Tebaldi, soprano (Tosca); Mario del Monaco, tenor (Cavaradossi); George London, baritone (Scarpia); Academy of Santa Cecilia Chorus and Orchestra, Rome, conducted by Francesco Molinari-Pradelli. London Stereo set OSA-1210, four sides, \$11.98.

⑧ LONDON'S second recording of "*Tosca*" with Tebaldi represents an improvement over its earlier effort. Indeed, we have here an effective performance of the opera considerably enhanced by frequently

superb engineering. The recording cannot claim unstinted praise; during the first act, especially, the voices are too distant in the manner of London's "*Aida*", about which I recently commented. The recording of the orchestra, however, is vivid and clean throughout. If London should decide to change its general set-up in the interest of better balance between voices and instrumentalists, I urge them to leave the orchestra as it is.

For its recordings of Italian opera, London would be wise to leave the conducting in its present hands. Molinari-Pradelli's stylish and precise work is impressive and one of the principal reasons why this "*Tosca*" easily outdistances its predecessor.

Tebaldi's mastery of the title role has grown since her first effort. Her vocal cream is as delectable as ever, and her grasp of the part is now firm and entirely her own. Some may not be able to accept

Tebaldi at her very best

⑧ THE best recommendation I can give to this performance, I suppose, is to confess that it "sent" me—I do not know how long it has been since I have been so moved by the last act. With all due praise for the exceptionally able and convincing cast, I must give first credit to Maestro Serafin, who keeps the performance so beautifully alive. It is surely his doing, too, that the singing is so finely shaded throughout the opera; for once close attention is paid to Puccini's dy-

namic markings. And of course we should not forget that the stereophonic recording makes it possible to go further along these lines than could be managed at the time when I last reviewed a recording of "*Bohème*". Tebaldi is at her very best as Mimi. She has always been particularly happy in this kind of music; her voice is soft and tender in quality, her characterization altogether convincing. Bergonzi matches her well; one rarely hears *Che gelida manina* sung with such tasteful reserve. One can overlook the fact that the offstage high C for the two principals that closes the first act does not quite come off. Bastianini is a first-rate Marcello, and Miss D'Angelo a properly shrewish Musetta, though she can make her voice quite lovely when she likes, and happily she likes in the famous *Waltz*. The diminuendo at the end—clearly indicated in the score—is both effective and surprising. My only complaint about this best all-round "*Bohème*" on records (it is far from being the first very good one) is that the surfaces are noisy. —P.L.M.

PUCCINI: "*La Bohème*"; Renata Tebaldi (Mimi); Carlo Bergonzi (Rodolfo); Gianna D'Angelo (Musetta); Cesare Siepi (Colline); Renato Cesari (Schaunard); Fernando Corena (Benoit; Alcindoro); Piero de Palma (Parpignol); Attilio Onesti (Customs Official); Chorus and Orchestra of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Rome (Bonaventura Somma, chorus master) conducted by Tullio Serafin. London Stereo set OSA-1208, six sides, \$17.94.

a Tosca that is not truly volatile, but others will be able to make a case for a Tosca whose character has roots in consistent generosity and warm-heartedness.

One would not expect Del Monaco to be the ideal Cavaradossi, for the character requires a degree of tenderness that up to now has been alien to Del Monaco's manner of expressing himself. And he does not surprise one here. But his strengths of vocal amplitude and good enunciation are allied with a pleasing measure of musical tension on this occasion, and his contribution accordingly winds up having a good deal of appeal.

To my knowledge, George London has never in the theater given such an effective statement of Scarpia's role as he does in this recording. He reads the part with considerable persuasiveness; and his singing, if not the ultimate in polish, is certainly more than adequate for Scarpia. The minor roles are in capable hands.

It is doubtful whether anyone is apt to consider this "*Tosca*" the equal of the Angel performance with its burning-coal intensity. But this is a good one, and the recording lets you hear more of Puccini's score than you have ever experienced before in your home. —C.J.L.

PUCCINI: "*Tosca*"—*Recondita armonia; E lucevan le stelle; "Gianni Schicchi"—Fierenze è come un albero fiorito; "Turandot"—Non piangere, Liù; Nessun dorma; "Bohème"—Che gelida manina; "Fanciulla del West"—Ch'ella mi creda libero; "Madama Butterfly"—Addio, fiorito asil; "Manon Lescaut"—Ah, Manon, mi tradisce; Guardate, pazzo io son; Richard Tucker (tenor) with Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. Columbia ML-5416, \$4.98.*

▲TUCKER has wrapped most of the best loved Puccini arias into a neat package, varying the norm somewhat by the inclusion of the buoyant "*Gianni Schicchi*" number (which suits his affirmative style of singing very well) and the two "other" outpourings from "*Manon Lescaut*" (i.e., other than *Donna non vidi mai*). The tenor is in splendid voice and his singing of this familiar music is as persuasive as ever. —P.L.M.

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RACHMANINOFF: *Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18; Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 43*; Raymond Lewenthal (piano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Maurice Abravanel. Westminster WWN-18884, \$4.98.

Rubinstein, Reiner, Chicago... RCA Vic. LM-6039
▲WHILE neither the pianist nor the conductor seems at home in these works, additional rehearsals might at least have unified their executions. The piano sound is strangely wooden, and badly integrated with the orchestra throughout. The second movement of the Concerto is, for some reason, many decibels lower in level than those before and after. —A.K.

RAVEL: *Bolero*; **FALLA:** *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*; **DUKAS:** *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*; The Symphony Orchestra of the Belgian National Radio conducted by Franz André. Telefunken Stereo TCS-18008, \$2.98.

§THOUGH better performances of these works are in the catalogue, the disc is not without merit. *Bolero* fares worst. Even the most casual listener won't miss some very, very badly flubbed solo entrances. The Falla is atmospheric and misty, and the unnamed pianist deserves better than

anonymity. Dukas' score is performed with imagination. —D.H.M.

RESPIGHI: *The Pines of Rome*; **GABRIELI:** *Pian e Forte*; **CESTI:** *Tu Mancavi a Tormentarmi, Crudelissima Speranza*; **FRESCOBALDI:** *Gagliarda*; **PALESTRINA:** *Adoramus Te*; Symphony of the Air conducted by Leopold Stokowski. United Artists Stereo UAL-7001, \$5.98.

(*Pines of Rome*)
 Toscanini (mono)..... RCA Victor LM-1768
§WHY is the close of *Pines of Rome* rescored? The percussion roll, in the text, is cut off at the second bar from the end. In this performance, it continues right on through to the double bar. Presumably because Stokowski does his own "mixing" in the reproductive process, the two F's played by the bassoon, contrabassoon, piano, organ, basses, and celli, and the pedal point B flat of the final bar, cannot be heard—only the written-in drum roll comes through. Other departures from what the composer has written are to be found: at the very outset, where the tempo is slower than the 92 to the quarter called for; at bar 138 of *I Pini di Villa Borghese*, where the *più vivo* is hardly observed; at bar 170 of this same episode, where a change in tempo to 132 to the quarter is not at all honored; and at bar 17 of *I Pini presso una catacomba*, where a faster tempo than the 60 to the quarter indicated is adopted. The foregoing is not to say that Stokowski does not offer a valid (except for the ending), highly interesting, and characteristically evocative reading, but only that it can hardly be termed "definitive". To this taste, however, Toscanini offers by far the more atmospheric, dramatic, and authoritative concept. About all that can be said for the transcriptions of early Italian works on the reverse side is that Stokowski remains a pre-eminent orchestral colorist if not a baroque stylist. —A.K.

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The Index of Record Reviews

Compiled by KURTZ MYERS

in the quarterly journal



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ROMBERG: *"The Student Prince"*; Mario Lanza (tenor); Norma Giusti (soprano); Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Paul Baron. RCA Victor LM-2339, \$4.98.

▲THIS selection of the music from the

favorite Romberg operetta will serve as a fitting memorial to the young tenor who died last summer. As an extra dividend for his admirers some songs *not* by Romberg have been added to the familiar hits of the show. One of the new numbers, the most assertive and luxuriant of them, called *I'll walk with God*, will be cherished by those to whom Lanza brought inspiration as well as pleasure. —P.L.M.

ROSSINI: *Overtures—"Barber of Seville"; "William Tell"; "Semiramide"; "The Silken Ladder";* New Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Kenneth Alwyn. Richmond Stereo S-29058, \$2.98.

⑧ **BIG**, spacious sound and lively performances. Concert-hall acoustics are simulated to an almost frightening degree. Quite a bargain. —D.H.M.

Schiller by Schubert—an important disc

SCHUBERT: *Gruppe aus dem Tartarus*, D. 583; *Die Götter Griechenlands*, D. 677; *Die Erwartung*, D. 159; *Sehnsucht*, D. 636; *Der Taucher*, D. 111; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone) and Karl Engel (piano). Angel Stereo S-35656, \$5.98.

⑧ THIS important disc is a late arrival in honor of last year's Schiller bicentennial; all the songs are Schubert settings of that famous poet. On the face of it the fact that so distinguished and greatly admired a poet should have attracted so few of the masters of the lied seems strange; Schubert set forty-two Schiller texts, but this is an exceptional score. Schiller was not given to the kind of lyricism that distinguished his friend Goethe, nor did he have the way of packing burgeoning thoughts into small verses as Heine could do. His poems are on a grander, more heroic scale, often favoring classical subjects, often telling highly romantic tales at considerable length. Of the latter aspect of his genius we have a perfect example in *Der Taucher*, which occupies the entire second side of this disc and plays for twenty-four minutes. The setting which Fischer-Dieskau sings is one of four attempts made by Schubert to put this poem to music; as William Mann points out in his notes, it dates from August 1814, two months before *Gretchen am Spinnrade*. Well, *Der Taucher* is a long song; the story of the intrepid youth plunging into the roaring tide at the whim of the king takes a lot of telling, and so Schubert's ballad runs on as Schiller's poem requires. What particularly interests me in the setting is the inevitable comparison it calls

up between Schubert and the great master of the ballad, Loewe. The form of the song is as free and close to the text as Loewe would have made it, but there is much pictorial detail that could have come only from Schubert. If the length of the song seems forbidding at first, anyone interested in German lieder should refuse to be intimidated. There are genuine rewards (though no one would call this a great piece of music) especially in so sensitive a performance.

Gruppe aus dem Tartarus is the one fairly well known song on this program, and a truly magnificent song it is. Where else in music can we find so graphic a picture of souls in torment? Fischer-Dieskau brings to it a nervous, almost angry quality, very different from the blood-curdling conception of Povla Frijs, whose recording long ago set the standard for this song. Fischer-Dieskau does not give us the infinite pathos of the Frijs performance, nor is there the same power in his proclamation of the word *Ewigkeit*: nevertheless, this is a strong and harrowing interpretation.

Die Götter Griechenlands has a particular interest for chamber music enthusiasts, for this is the song with thematic relationship to the *Scherzo* of the A minor String Quartet. It is the smallest of the songs on this program, perhaps the subtlest. In a less warm and understanding performance it could easily seem inconsequential; here it is very moving. *Die Erwartung* is a kind of extended *scena*, alternating recitative, as the lover thinks he hears his lady coming, and lyrical passages as he feels the power of nature and applies

its manifestations to himself. *Schnuscht* is another highly charged romantic expression, in which the young man, longing to be somewhere else, finally takes matters into his own hands and sails off in a boat. This recital does not present the most familiar side of Schubert, but it shows us an important one. We are indeed fortunate to have its undertones as well as its written notes so fully realized. The voice is well served by the stereophonic sound, though we could do with a stronger focus on the well played piano of Karl Engel. As is often the case in stereo recitals, the singer's consonants come through with almost startling clarity. —P.L.M.

●
SCHUMANN: *Carnaval, Op. 9; Fantasiestücke, Op. 12*; Ania Dorfmann (piano). RCA Victor Stereo LSC-2207, \$5.98.

(*Carnaval*)
Rachmaninoff.....Cam. 396
Novaes.....Vox 11160
(*Fantasiestücke*)
Richter.....Decca 9921

⑤THE competition of Novaes, Rachmaninoff and Richter is a little too keen for Miss Dorfmann, although she does manage very competent, fluent, and serious interpretations. Her problem may be that she is too serious. Despite her near-flawless technique and earnestness of purpose, she has missed the essence of these finely wrought works. Her *Fantasiestücke* lacks the capriciousness and power of Richter's recording, and her occasionally heavy-handed *Carnaval* has not the courage and the imagination of Rachmaninoff's memorable performance. She seems to be holding back, preferring a ritardando to an accelerando. Though she does achieve a certain romantic end, she never builds any great emotional intensity. Nor does she permit the miniatures to take flight. The recorded sound is good, but the stereo seems quite superfluous. —D.A.

●
SIBELIUS: *Symphony No. 5 in E flat; Pohjola's Daughter (Symphonic Fantasy)*; B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. Capitol Stereo EMI SG-7181, \$5.98.

⑤IN both this Fifth Symphony and *Pohjola's Daughter*, Sargent to my mind achieves the most successful interpreta-

tion so far in his current survey of Sibelius. His prior recordings of the First and Second were extremely well played but marked by a degree of coolness and also a certain lack of the atmosphere so necessary to this music. The present reading, I am happy to report, is not only full-bodied but also has a great deal of mood. The stereo recording is very well done and may especially be recommended inasmuch as no other stereo version of these compositions is available to us at present. Collectors should be apprised, however, of the recent Pye (England) recording by Sir John Barbirolli with exactly this same coupling; it is a remarkable disc, although I heard it only in mono form, beautifully recorded and marvelously performed in a manner both more dramatic and personal than Sargent's. —I.K.

●
STRAUSS: Waltzes and Polkas: *Swallows from Austria* (Josef Strauss); *Zap-perl Polka* (Johann Strauss); *Emperor Waltz* (Johann Strauss); *Vienna, City of My Dreams* (Sieczynsky); *Thousand and One Nights Waltz* (Josef Strauss); *Viennese Children* (Johann Strauss); *My Austria* (Suppé-Preis); The Boys Choir of Vienna; Vienna State Opera Orchestra (Volksooper). Omega Stereo OWL-1038, \$3.98.

⑤THE boys have themselves a lovely time with this music of their home city; it hardly needs saying that their youthful voices add a new appeal to the more or less well known tunes. It seems a bit odd that this program, presented in the name of the Strauss family, should contain a piece by Johann Strauss' contemporary Suppé, and another more recent work by Sieczynsky. The latter, of course, has become a sort of national anthem, which fact in itself may be taken to prove the appropriateness of its inclusion on a Strauss program. —P.L.M.

●
R. STRAUSS: "Le Bourgeois Gentil-homme" Suite; *Waltz Scene from "Intermezzo"*; Philharmonia Orchestra under Wolfgang Sawallisch. Angel Stereo S-35646, \$5.98.

⑤WHAT with solo instruments popping up every other minute in "Le Bourgeois

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Leopold Stokowski

Prokofiev: Peter and the Wolf, narrated by Captain Kangaroo, Leopold Stokowski, Stadium Symphony Orchestra of New York. LPBR-6043 SDBR-3043 (Stereo) **Shostakovich:** Symphony No. 5, Leopold Stokowski, Stadium Symphony Orchestra of New York. LPBR-6010 SDBR-3010 (Stereo) **Brahms:** Symphony No. 3 in F Major, Leopold Stokowski, Houston Symphony Orchestra. LPBR-6030 SDBR-3030 (Stereo) **Wagner:** Parsifal—Good Friday Spell and Symphonic Synthesis of Act 3, Leopold Stokowski, Houston Symphony Orchestra. LPBR-6031 SDBR-3031 (Stereo) **Villa-Lobos:** Uirapuru plus Modinha and **Prokofiev**—Cinderella (Ballet Suite) with Leopold Stokowski, Stadium Symphony Orchestra of New York LPBR-6016 SDBR-3016 (Stereo)

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Abril, 1960

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Gentilhomme", and tailors and fencing masters entering to the tunes of gavottes and the pronouncements of trombones, it would seem, offhand, to be a wonderful chance for stereo—if not to be used in a directional sense at least to add depth and brilliance to Strauss' naturally vivid orchestration. Too bad that the stereo effects are negligible in this recording, and the sound itself less than brilliant. The performance does about ninety-eight per cent justice to the score—the remaining two per cent reserved with the indefinable feeling that the conductor, somehow, could have had a little more fun with the music (to put it frivolously) even at the risk of exaggerating its wrynesses. But the soloists are wonderful, and that is half the show. The *Waltz Scene* is adorned with a good solo trumpet, and if the middle section drags on a bit for some tastes, the fault is not Sawallisch's. —S.F.

●
SUPPÉ: *Overtures—Light Cavalry; Poet and Peasant; Morning, Noon, and Night in Vienna, Pique Dame*; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Georg Solti. London Stereo CS-6146, \$4.98.

⑤ THE Vienna Philharmonic performs its duties here with an obvious relish. In fact, the playing might be almost overabundant to suit some tastes, but not mine. London's stereo sound is superb in every way, although there is a brief lapse in surface quality on side one. —P.C.P.

●
TCHAIKOVSKY: *Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor*; Sviatoslav Richter (piano); Czech Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karel Ancerl. Parliament PLP-120, \$1.98.

▲ THE month's most extraordinary buy is undoubtedly this Richter recording, at only \$1.98. The superb Soviet artist offers a deeply personal but entirely ravishing performance that breathes new life into the old war horse. The Czech Philharmonic under Ancerl provides superior accompaniment, particularly impressive in the clarity and incisiveness of the orchestral sound. As indicated, Richter's interpretation is completely his own. He holds no truck with tradition when it

comes to setting forth his own highly original musical ideas with taste and conviction. He has made innovations in the phrasing, eliminating some of the familiar and predictable heavy downbeat accents, to preserve the flow of an exquisite lyric line. His tone is robust and romantic, but never sentimental. Although the performance includes some of the most hair-raising pyrotechnics on records, the emphasis is always on the grandeur of the music. This version most resembles the Gilels in choice of tempi and coloristic effects. The highly touted Cliburn interpretation is, perhaps, more youthful in exuberance. However, Richter offers mature musicianship along with his finger wizardry. The engineering is good.—D.A.

●
TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64*; Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Columbia ML-5435, \$4.98.

The Same: Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. Epic LC-3647, \$4.98.

Monteux, Boston..... RCA Victor LM-2239

▲ THE Slavic idiom comes to both of these conductors as a birthright, but each in this case responds differently. Ormandy is more suave and sentimental, at times indulging in mannerisms of phrasing and slurred string progressions. The multi-colored variety of sound he draws from his fabulous orchestra are lush in texture. Szell prefers a more forceful approach with a thinner (but still beautifully warm), tightly-knit fiber of sound, greater animation (last movement in particular), and stronger rhythmic and dramatic stress. In their separate ways, both versions do noble service to Tchaikovsky, but for sheer excitement I still prefer Monteux. The Columbia is better engineered than has been the case with this orchestra in the recent past. The glossy, shallow, and over-reverberant sound of old has been remedied. Problems of balance between the too distantly recorded horns (especially in the solo at the outset of the second movement) and the strings, and of monitoring in the upper dynamic levels, still remain. The Epic also shows signs of monitoring. —A.K.

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From Everest, yet another abridged 'Manfred' Symphony

THE hour-long "Symphonie en quatre tableaux d'après le poème dramatique de Byron" (to give it its full subtitle in preference to "symphonic poem") is a brooding, sprawling, heroically larger-than-life work, and for the largest orchestra that Tchaikovsky used—a work full of pregnant silences and rhetorical iterations: in a word, Byronic. Now I assume that intelligent listeners who go for it at all prefer to do so *in toto*, since the generous, open romantic spirit which infuses it simply doesn't flourish in the atmosphere of snipping and pasting, in the dictatorship of the stopwatch. Personally I think its form is ideally suited to its content, but of this I am sure: if its form is unwieldy or redundant, the cuts commonly made in it fail to make it any less so. They are frame-fitting conveniences one and all, the frame being in this case the two-faced LP of about 25 minutes' ideal duration per side. And that is where Everest and Goossens have fallen down here—by shirking the economically unpleasant but artistically inescapable prospect that this *should* have been the first three-sided, and thus, with the much-needed help of stereo, potentially close to ideal *Manfred*.

How much does it matter? Tchaikovsky is, after all, one of the most frequently cut composers, primarily, I think, because he himself was so uncertain of the merit of each successive work once it was finished, and repeatedly encouraged abridge-

ment out of sheer self-deprecation. He was his own least appreciative critic, to judge by his communications, his *Manfred* included. But if he was right, why go on playing it at all after 75 years? If he was wrong, what do his self-doubtings matter today? This applies equally to the Fifth Symphony and other works rather widely cut. As for the relatively unplayed *Manfred*, Ralph Wood has written, in the 1945 Tchaikovsky symposium edited by Gerald Abraham: "*Manfred* was Tchaikovsky's *chef d'oeuvre*. It is devoid of vulgarisms and of most of his other weaknesses, and in their place possesses several virtues found nowhere else in his music. It is a masterpiece, and its neglect is quite lamentable—though its length and difficulty may to an extent account for that neglect." He then concurs in "its heroic, but perfectly judged, proportions." *Sic transit timor Tchaikovskii*. I recommend this essay for further details which cannot be elaborated here. John Briggs' new "Collector's Tchaikovsky", on the other hand, dismisses the work quite airily.

The recorded cuts occur mainly in the finale. The most murderous is that employed by Toscanini (very convenient, of course): bars 140 to 257, or about five minutes of music, including a fine and characteristic fugal development. (The Eulenburg miniature score used for bar reference has recently reappeared—C. F. Peters Corp., \$4.50—with a 1958 preface by Abraham.) Fabian Sevitzy long ago recorded in Indianapolis a complete *Manfred* on seven 78s; when this was later dubbed onto an erstwhile Camden LP, the same 140-257 stretch was duly edited out in the lab! Kletzki makes a shorter cut (140-188), but grotesquely awkward. The effect of the longer cut is to jump directly and smoothly from the midst of

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Manfred*, Op. 58;
London Symphony Orchestra conducted
by Sir Eugene Goossens. Everest
LPBR-6035 or Stereo SDBR-3035,
\$4.40.

Toscanini, NBC Symphony.....RCA LVT-1024
Rakhlin, USSR Symphony.....West. 18536
Kletzki, Philharmonia.....Angel 35167



George Gordon, Lord Byron

the first Bacchanalian passage, over much intervening material, into the midst of the second. Kletzki's folly brings the orgy to a dead stop in mid-air, as if frozen—ludicrously followed by a bit of the succeeding *Lento* passage, beginning half way through an eight-bar sequential phrase! And Goossens merely shifts the surgery to a later, and only slightly less sensitive, spot (bars 320-358). He also cuts the beautiful *Andante* movement (bars 63-89), eliminating a sturdy B minor section that does not appear elsewhere, so redundancy is certainly not the reason. His conception, in a number of respects, just misses the ultimate spark. Kletzki is further addicted to small, annoying cuts in innumerable phrases.

That brings us to the interesting conclusion that the only conductors with an integral view of this opus are the Russians: Sevitzyk, Gauk, Rakhlin. And of these three, the two Soviet musicians are by far the soundest and most idiomatic interpreters. Sevitzyk's weakest points were the pastoral sections, especially the shepherd pipes, which he grossly sentimentalized. Alexander Gauk led the Bolshoi Symphony in a fine but deleted version on Concert Hall. Thus my current preference for an available performance is that of Natan Rakhlin and the U.S.S.R. State Symphony, that fine orchestra which recently toured the U.S.A. as the Moscow State Symphony, whose startlingly nasal oboe can be easily recognized in the opening solo of the *Andante*. The London orchestras under Kletzki and Goossens do some marvelous playing, but in a comparative vacuum perforce. Now in fitting the complete symphony on one record, the Gauk version made a side break in the *Andante*; the Rakhlin, however, does get

By JACK DIETHER

the complete *Andante* and finale on a distortionless side 2: a memento of the monophonic age.

My favorite passage in the Rakhlin begins at bar 134 of the finale, where the Bacchanale theme is taken over by the trombones, *fff*. They really take it, and Rakhlin alone permits them the liberty of filling in the rapidly repeated notes in the melody, which Tchaikovsky apparently feared they would not be able to do with good effect. This is a thrilling moment in no way duplicated in the other recordings, though I wish they had the benefit of the *fff* gong sound that announces it in the Kletzki version. *Manfred* anticipates the sobbing string dirge, with snarling trombone comments, so memorable in the *Pathétique* (at i-289 and iv-394 in the present work), and even Rakhlin's men don't snarl and sob quite like the Bolshoi. Try to hear this somehow, if you like *Manfred*. And note the full effect which Gauk gives to that wonderful cadential low B in the bassoons, just before the final appearance of the dirge. Kletzki attacks the downbeat just a second too soon, completely annihilating the crucial, pivotal note. These are but a few of many vivid instances of attention to detail and lack of it. I will say, however, that the final *apothéose*, unsurpassed by *Swan Lake's*, includes an *ad lib.* organ part (often omitted) in the wind texture that is effectively heard only on Angel and Everest—and quite an effect it is! The offstage bell in A in the *Andante* is of best quality in the English renditions also.

Angel's sound was superb, and Everest's stereo is simply overwhelming. If and when we get the equivalent of a Rakhlin or a Gauk performance in stereo, I believe that *Manfred* will finally take its rightful place in phonographic annals, untouched by condescension.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Serenade in C for Strings, Op. 48*; **ARENSKY:** *Variations on a Theme by Tchaikovsky for strings, Op. 35a*; Philharmonica Hungarica conducted by Antal Dorati. Mercury Stereo SR-90200, \$5.95.

⑧ ONE cannot but salute the courage of this band of refugees who, after fleeing Budapest in the mass exodus of late 1956, formed an orchestra as a means of keeping themselves and the Hungarian spirit alive. Appearing at Carnegie Hall earlier this season the ensemble made a generally favorable impression, though it is more modest in size (about ninety), Polish, and

body of tone than the orchestras to which we are accustomed. Under the circumstances, however, one wonders why so demanding a vehicle as the *Serenade in C* was chosen to be recorded, for if ever there were a work that will point up the slightest weakness or imprecision, this is it. The results are not happy both from the standpoint of execution (thinness and faulty intonation in the upper registers) and interpretation. Dorati misses much of the character and depth of this music. The less challenging Arensky Variations are better done if still not flawless. Mercury's miking is close-in —A.K.

Seiber's "Quartetto Lirico"

Music in which to take heart—and delight

TIPPETT: *Quartet No. 2 in F sharp*; **SEIBER:** "Quartetto Lirico" (*Quartet No. 3*); Amadeus Quartet. His Master's Voice ALP-1302, \$4.98 (Import—available in the United States through Lambert & Mycroft, Haverford, Pa.)

▲ IF listeners who care about contemporary music have ever despaired over what often seems to be a mutual incompatibility between sophisticated composing procedures and anything resembling aural appeal, let them take heart—and delight—in the *Quartetto Lirico* of Mátyás Seiber, a 55-year-old Hungarian living and teaching in England. From the standpoint of sheer color this work is a marvel—in fact, I have never heard four strings sound quite like this before. The range of simultaneous pitches, from first violin to cello, is immense in places, which is part of the secret of the texture's effect; but this in itself is nothing new, nor is the *sul ponticello* bowing which lends such a shimmering gloss to parts of the second move-

ment. It is even unjust to the composer, perhaps, to comment first on the aspect of ensemble color, because the achievement of mere color, we may be sure, was not his aim. His aim was to construct a work on thematic ideas which are units of a 12-tone row, and without forfeiting structural integrity he has written, perhaps even inadvertently, music which is vivid in an almost literary way. The finale strikes me as eerie and vaporous enough to suggest any number of sinister mental images, but let me hasten to add that the cavernous, obtruding voice of the cello is reiterating all the time a crucial fragment of the original tone row. And so it is throughout, in the stresses and calms of the first movement and the stylish wit of the scherzo. There is, as far as I can see, no intellectual softness in Seiber; his "effects" spring naturally from the solid core of his musical matter.

The Tippett Quartet, perhaps inevitably, is the paler half of this pairing. The composer's fascination with the linear weave of the Italian and English madrigals is a workable tenet in string quartet writing as far as it goes; but the danger is monotony, and I think this Quartet could do with some rudenesses or at least some exclamation points here and there. The Amadeus Quartet plays superbly. Mr. Seiber, who dedicated his Quartet to them

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in 1951, couldn't have chosen better. And the recorded sound is bright and true. —S.F.

VERDI: "*Trovatore*"—*Tacea la notte placida; D'amor sull' ali rosee; Miserere; Tu vedrai che amore in terra* (with Luisa Maragliano, soprano; Athos Cesarini, tenor; Mario Del Monaco, tenor; Maggio Musicale Fiorentino Chorus and Orchestra of the Suisse Romande conducted by Alberto Erede); "*Forza del Destino*"—*Me pellegrina ed orfano; Madre, pietosa vergine* (with Chorus and Orchestra of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Rome, conducted by Francesco Molinari-Pradelli); "*Otello*"—*Salce, salce; Ave Maria* (with Luisa Ribacchi, mezzo-soprano, and Orchestra of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Rome, conducted by Alberto Erede); Renata Tebaldi (soprano). London Stereo OS-25082, \$5.98.

⑤OF these chunks from three complete opera recordings I found the selections from "*Forza del Destino*" the most satisfying, though Tebaldi's Desdemona is justly considered one of her best roles. She is always at her finest in lyrical music that does not tax her upper range. The scenes from "*Forza*" are especially stylish and controlled. The balance with the offstage chorus of monks in *Madre, pietosa* is excellent in this stereophonic version, and aside from a little roughness in the "*Otello*" music all is well on this side of the disc—decidedly better, I think, than in the original monophonic issues. The "*Trovatore*" side is a few levels lower as to both performance and reproduction. *Tacea la notte* has high notes that want to be floated in the manner of a Muzio or a Milanov, and Tebaldi cannot match those ladies in this. Nor has she the vocal agility to make more than a stock piece of *Di tale amor*. Tebaldi is not famous for her trills, and she finds it most convenient to disregard most of the spots where Verdi calls for them in *D'amor sull' ali rosee*. All in all, I was never too happy about her "*Trovatore*" Leonora, though I cannot help conceding a certain distinction in her singing. But the "*Forza*" and "*Otello*" scenes have more than that. —P.L.M.

The Cello Galaxy—VILLA-LOBOS: *Bachianas Brasileiras Nos. 1 and 5; J. S. BACH/VILLA-LOBOS: Prelude and Fugue No. 8* for orchestra of cello. Marni Nixon (soprano); Concert Arts Cello Ensemble conducted by Felix Slatkin. Capitol Stereo SP-8484, \$5.95.

⑤IF it weren't for having enjoyed an earlier recording (on Everest) of Villa-Lobos himself conducting the Violoncello Society in some similar works, I would have concluded from these Capitol presentations that the massed-cellos project was inevitably dreary and doomed to failure. The players are not entirely to blame here, though they don't always agree on pitch and rhythm. The truth of the matter is, it seems to me, that *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 1* is a prosaic affair anyway, with the trivial little closing fugue simply falling short of the mark. A more polished performance might turn the trick, but Slatkin's leadership does little for No. 1 or for the Bach Fugue. No. 5 benefits from the presence of Marni Nixon, but the galaxy needs some brighter stars to illuminate these pieces for me. —S.F.

VIVALDI: *The Four Seasons* (from "*Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'invenzione, Op. 8*"); Renato Biffoli (violin); Gli Accademici di Milano. Vox PL-11480, \$4.98.

Philharmonia Orch. Angel 35216
Solisti di Zagreb Bach Guild 564
I Musici Epic LC-3216
Stuttgart Chamber Orch. London LLP-386

▲THE above list represents, in my consideration, the best four among the other many recordings of the *Four Seasons*. Add to it, however, the present recording, for this is not just another good version of this wonderful music. This particular interpretation is unusual for one quality which is missing even among the best of the other presentations: most of them stress virtuosity, not necessarily at the expense of the music but with emphasis on brilliance in terms of speed. Gli Accademici di Milano perform the music at much more relaxed tempi, which is incidentally quite correct so far as baroque practices are concerned, yet without any lessening of virtuosic spirit. The solo violinist is excellent, the ensemble well-



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integrated and light, and the mood of each section is most successfully conveyed. One never has the impression in this performance that the score poses technical problems. There is a lack of added improvisational passages and ornamentation, as there is also in almost every other recording, but in all other respects this one is highly superior. The recording, with a clearly audible continuo harpsichord, is excellent. Recommended.—I.K.

•
VIVALDI: *Concerti for Bassoon, Strings, and Continuo Nos. 8 in F, 13 in C, 14 in C minor, and 17 in C*; Sherman Walt

(bassoon), Zimblar Sinfonietta. RCA Victor LM-2353, \$4.98, or Stereo LSC-2353, \$5.98.

Bianchi, Gli Accademici di Milano. Vox PL-10740
WALT is first bassoonist of the Boston Symphony. Stylistically, his brilliantly executed interpretations, together with those of the Zimblar Sinfonietta, are quite good if not perhaps the ultimate in baroque techniques. By that I mean that there could be more ornamentation than we hear, but otherwise these are very lively performances, and the excellent recording adds greatly to the listener's enjoyment. Even the harpsichord continuo is more audible than usual. —I.K.

Several views of Birgit Nilsson

WAGNER: "*Tristan und Isolde*"—*Prelude and Liebestod*; Act 1, Scene 3, *Isolde's Narrative and Curse*; Birgit Nilsson (soprano); Grace Hoffman (contralto); Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch. London Stereo OS-25138, \$5.98.

BEETHOVEN: "*Fidelio*"—*Abscheulicher, wo eilst du hin? Ah perfidol*, Op. 65; **WEBER:** "*Oberon*"—*Ocean, du Ungeheuer*; "*Der Freischütz*"—*Wie nahte mir der Schlummer*; **MOZART:** "*Don Giovanni*"—*Or sai, chi l'onore*; Birgit Nilsson (soprano); Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Heinz Wallberg. Angel Stereo S-35719, \$5.98.

◊ **ADMIRERS** of the reigning sensation of the 1959-60 Metropolitan season will want both of these admirably lifelike recordings to round out their impression of the artist. The interest in hearing them together is enhanced by their very divergence in reproductive techniques. The London engineers have striven for and achieved with impressive success the kind of balance we hear in the concert hall or opera house. The voice rides easily over the crests of the orchestral waves, for it is an ample voice and a distinctive one. The Angel disc is a more characteristic example of "recording balance", for the spotlight is kept steadily on the voice, though the sound of the orchestra is always big and clear.

The "*Tristan*" recording is divided neatly into two portions, following concert hall practice rather than operatic sequence. The *Prelude* and *Liebestod* thus come together on one side, while the long scene from the first act occupies the second. It seems inevitable that Miss Nilsson will one day take part in a complete "*Tristan*" recording; meanwhile we must be grateful for this sample of the finest *Isolde* of the day. Hers is a voice with drama in it; it is well equalized throughout an extensive range, and it is so easily produced that she can finish a long evening with a vocally fresh and unstrained *Liebestod*. Surprisingly, she seems less concerned with diction than with tone; there is nothing wrong with her pronouncing or her delivery of the words, to be sure, but she does not point them directly at the listener. She is well assisted by Miss Hoffman's Brangäne in the scene from Act 1. The dynamic range of the recording is a subject in itself: if one finds the opening too soft one should not for that reason set the level higher. In time the power is more than adequate.

The Angel recital covers some of the same ground as Eileen Farrell's recent set of arias. Though Farrell's voice is without a peer today, there is more excitement in Nilsson's presentation of the music. Nilsson has the requisite breadth of style for the Beethoven numbers; the Weber

U.S. PATENT 2,775,309

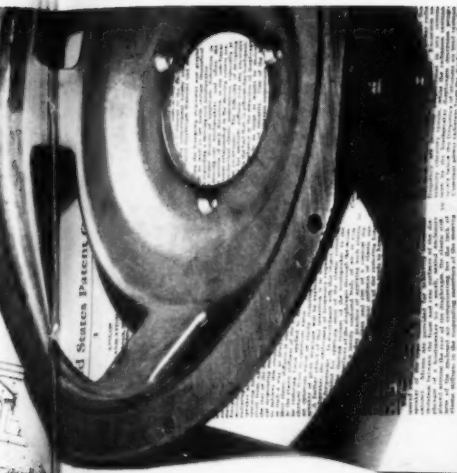
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ACOUSTIC RESEARCH, INC. 24 Thorndike Street Cambridge 41, Massachusetts





UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

JOSEPH M. VILBER, of Cambridge, Mass.,
assignor to
Acoustic Research, Inc.,
a corporation of Massachusetts.

IMPROVEMENTS IN MICROPHONE

Be it remembered that JOSEPH M. VILBER, of the County of Middlesex, State of Massachusetts, has invented certain new and useful Improvements in Microphone, and do hereby declare that the following is a full and exact description of the same, reference being made to the accompanying drawings, and to the claims at the end of this specification.

My invention relates to a microphone, and more particularly to a microphone of the type known as a "ribbon" microphone.

The object of my invention is to provide a microphone of the type mentioned which shall be of simple construction, and which shall be capable of producing a clear and distinct sound, and which shall be of such construction as to be capable of being used in a variety of positions, and which shall be of such construction as to be capable of being used in a variety of positions, and which shall be of such construction as to be capable of being used in a variety of positions.

The foregoing is a full and exact description of the invention, reference being made to the accompanying drawings, and to the claims at the end of this specification.

JOSEPH M. VILBER

By *Robert C. [Signature]*
Attorney at Law

Acoustic Research, Inc.,
NEWTON, MASS.

Examination of the Patent

JOSEPH M. VILBER, of Cambridge, Mass.,
assignor to
Acoustic Research, Inc.,
a corporation of Massachusetts.

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JOSEPH M. VILBER

By *Robert C. [Signature]*
Attorney at Law

Acoustic Research, Inc.,
NEWTON, MASS.

Examination of the Patent

arias have not been so well sung on recent recordings. The "*Don Giovanni*" piece, however, done without the tremendous recitative that should be a part of it, is too marked rhythmically to carry all the conviction it needs. This is Miss Nilsson's least happy effort. The big and well integrated orchestra that supports her is another point of superiority over the Farrell recording. —P.L.M.

WAGNER: "*Tannhäuser*"—*Dich, teure Halle; Allmächt'ge Jungfrau; "Lohengrin"*—*Einsam in trüben Tagen; Euch Lüften, die mein Klagen; "Walküre"*—*Du bist der Lenz;* **VERDI:** "*Otello*"—*Era più calmo?; Piangea cantando; Ave Maria, piena di grazia* (with Monica Sinclair, contralto); "*Don Carlo*"—*Tu che le vanità; Aase Nordmo Löwberg* (soprano) with Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind and Warwick Braithwaite. Angel Stereo S-35715, \$5.98.

ⓈAS this is written Miss Löwberg is in

the midst of a busy second season at the Metropolitan. Clearly she has won popular approval. Her voice is ample and accurate, of good size and distinctive quality. She is personable and at home on the stage. This program, made up of thrice-familiar fare, would seem to have been designed to show what she can do in two schools of opera; it is not surprising that she is more successful in the German than the Italian. But Wagner as well as Verdi, especially in *Euch, Lüften, die mein Klagen*, requires a kind of floated tone which the soprano has not yet mastered. Otherwise her singing is well managed and secure, though there is a certain sameness in her approach to the various heroines she portrays, from Elsa, Elisabeth and Sieglinde to Desdemona and Elisabetta. Neither *Dich, teure Halle* nor *Du bist der Lenz* arouses much excitement in her. The stereophonic sound of the record is broad, rich and big, and the voice is well in balance. But on the second side I was annoyed by surface hiss. —P.L.M.

Some very great Wagnerian singing

WAGNER: "*Die Walküre*"—*Ho-jo-to-ho!; Final Scene; "Götterdämmerung"*—*Siegfried's Narrative; Final Scene;* Frida Leider (soprano); Lauritz Melchior (tenor); Friedrich Schorr (baritone); Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Leo Blech; London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Robert Heger. Angel COLH-105, \$5.98.

▲LISTENING to some of the better recent Wagnerian recordings I could not help regretting that the great singers of the early electrical period could not have come together with the wonders of modern reproduction. This disc comes with a thrilling surprise, for though it can hardly match the best of stereo or even plain hi-fi, the sound emerges from it with remarkable clarity and presence; indeed it has nothing to be ashamed of in any respect. And the singing proves everything we old-timers may say about the artists of twenty or thirty years ago. Opening with the beginning of Act 2 of "*Walküre*", Leider sings a *Ho-jo-to-ho!* certainly unequaled since

her time. For once the cry has a girlish quality, and it pours out with ease and joy. From this we move on to Brünnhilde's pleading, and proceed with some cuts through *Wotan's Farewell* to the end of the drama. This, in one word, is very great Wagnerian singing from two of the finest artists in operatic history. The "*Götterdämmerung*" side of the disc begins with Melchior (assisted by Otto Helgers) in Siegfried's narrative and death, then jumps to the *Immolation Scene*. Aside from the impression that some of the tempi must have been adjusted to the old 78 r.p.m. time limitations, this final scene is a masterpiece. Beyond any question Frida Leider's was to me the brightest and most vital of post-World War I Wagnerian sopranos, and she was in her prime when these scenes were recorded. Unfortunately the orchestral postlude after the *Immolation* is mostly omitted. The finely gotten-out and well written booklet includes text and translations, and points out all the cuts. —P.L.M.

Discophile

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SCHUBERT: Die Schoene Muellerin—Ernst Haefliger, tenor; Jacqueline Bonneau, piano

LPM-19207/8; SLPM-136039/40*

BARTOK: Bluebeard's Castle (Opera in One Act)—Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone; Hertha Toepper, contralto; Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra; Ferenc Fricsay, conductor

LPM 18565, SLPM 138030*

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DVORAK: Requiem, Op. 89 (Complete)—Maria Stader, soprano; Sieglinde Wagner, alto; Ernst Haefliger, tenor; Kim Borg, bass; Czech Choir; Philharmonic Orchestra of Prague; Karel Ancelr, conductor

LPM 18547/48, SLPM 138026/27*

HAYDN: Missa Sanctae Caecilliae—Maria Stader, soprano; Marga Hoeffgen, alto; Richard Holm, tenor; Josef Greindl, bass; Choir and Symphony Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio; Eugen Jochum, conductor

HANDEL: Organ Concerto in F Major—Michael Schneider, organ; Symphony Orchestra of the Bavarian Radio; Eugen Jochum, conductor

LPM 18545/46, SLPM 138028/29*

BERLIOZ: La Damnation de Faust (Complete)—Consuelo Rubio, mezzo-soprano; Richard Verreau, tenor; Michel Roux, baritone; Pierre Mollet, bass; Choeur Elizabeth Brasseur; Lamoureux Orchestra of Paris; Igor Markevitch, conductor

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Test Reports on 18 Stereo Amplifiers.

American Audio Institute, 394 East 18th Street, Paterson, N. J., \$2.50.

By C. VICTOR CAMPOS

HERE is the answer to many prayers. It is only the beginning, true, but more reports are planned or in process. The sponsors plan to issue similar test reports on power amplifiers, tuners, etc.

The American Audio Institute is independent and "permits no compromise with ethical principles". The Institute maintains a complete testing laboratory, and a staff which is experienced in both theoretical engineering and practical application of design.

The reports appear in booklet form and are packed with information. It is by far the most nearly complete and most useful source of technical data that I have encountered. Nothing else contains such diversified information gathered under controlled conditions about so many amplifiers. Only the (now defunct) *Audio League Reports* approached it.

Each amplifier is subjected to the same tests under identical conditions, making possible a direct comparison among any number of amplifiers. A photograph of each, with its model number, accompanies its respective set of curves. Frequency response and power response (maximum power output) curves are run individually. Frequency response curves were run at one-watt output, although of course maximum power varied with the individual amplifiers. For amplifiers with built-in "scratch" and "rumble" filters a frequency response curve is provided, showing the effect of the filters on the response of the amplifier. Amplifiers with "loudness controls" have an additional test curve showing how much error (or difference, in db) from the standard "Fletcher-Munson" compensation, is effected by the control at two different positions of the volume control.

Curves showing per cent of harmonic distortion, at 40 cps, 1000 cps and 10,000

cps, from below .1 watt to full output, also are available from these reports. An additional superimposed curve shows the intermodulation distortion. These sets of curves will dispel quite a few misapprehensions concerning the distortion of some amplifiers. Again, it is exceedingly simple to compare distortion at any power between any two (or more) amplifiers.

The effect of the tone controls on frequency response and their range are also plotted. The last curve shows the error or deviation from the true RIAA characteristic. Transient response of the amplifier is shown by means of a 100-cps square wave. Even though this idea is one step better than no transient response measure, I firmly believe an additional square wave at 1000 cps would have given a better over-all picture of supersonic stability under transient conditions. It should be pointed out that extensive experience with square waves is necessary in order to draw any conclusions about transient response from a square wave photo or facsimile.

The following tables are also part of the individual test reports:

1. *Crosstalk*: This is a phenomenon encountered in the switching system of amplifiers. If, let us say, your tuner is on while you are playing a record and the sound of the tuner "leaks into" the phonograph channel, this is known as crosstalk.

2. *Stereo Crosstalk*: (Channel Separation). This is measured and expressed in db. It states how much isolation there is between channels. It is believed by many authorities that isolation smaller than 15 db is deteriorating to stereophony.

3. *Stability*: This is the ability of an amplifier not to oscillate or become "neurotic" under loads similar to electrostatic speakers. This was checked under transient conditions (square wave), steady state condition (sine wave), and no output.

4. *Tracking Error*: This is the ability of a ganged or double volume control to increase or decrease the volume of both channels equally. This error is expressed

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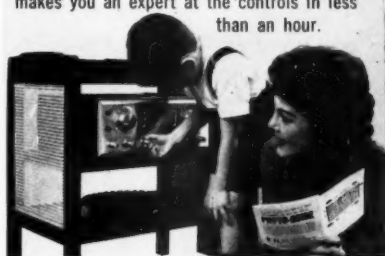
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in db at six positions of the volume control.

5. *Bass and Treble Control Calibration*: This is also expressed in db and states how far off the controls were found from a true flat position as marked on the front panel.

6. *Sensitivity*: What input is necessary to drive the amplifier to full output.

7. *Shock Hazard*: How dangerous a shock you are likely to get from each unit.

Even though most of the information is on a technical level, very explicit instructions on the meaning of each curve and its evaluation are given at the beginning of the report. For those who cannot assimilate all of the information, a point system is developed and plotted

at the end of the report to permit a complete evaluation of all of the amplifiers. This also aids immeasurably in comparing over-all performance among the units.

These reports are a tremendous undertaking. Their information tallied exactly with that which was available to me or which I learned while testing or repairing a particular amplifier. Any deviation was due entirely to different procedures.

This booklet is an extremely wise investment for anyone planning to purchase an integrated stereo amplifier. No matter how little information is assimilated, the opportunity for comparisons alone is worth more than the price. It should be available from your high-fidelity dealer or directly from A.A.I.

Craft's questions; Stravinsky's answers

CONVERSATIONS WITH IGOR STRAVINSKY, By Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft. Doubleday, 162 pp., \$4.

THE TITLE of this book is accurate. Robert Craft, the American conductor who is Stravinsky's protégé, asks the questions; Stravinsky provides the answers. Most of the questions are about Stravinsky's music and a lot of other music, too; about a number of the people Stravinsky has come in contact with, the tools available to the composer, performing music (particularly the moderns), and the directions in which Stravinsky thinks music is apt to go.

Stravinsky is unfailingly consistent in his point of view, and for that reason, as much as any other, well worth reading.

Anyone who is moderately familiar with Stravinsky's music will not be surprised to discover that the man has an exceptionally orderly mind. He exhibits a peculiar but exceedingly sharp wit which makes even opinions that might ordinarily seem outrageous stick in the mind. He is clearly a brilliant conversationalist.

The questions asked of Stravinsky are, however, often excessively colored by Craft's own personality. And there are a few that give the unsettling impression of an arch interrogation of God. One of the high points of the book is some hitherto unpublished letters of Debussy. They brightly reflect this extraordinary man's personality and exhibit his luminous prose style. There are a number of interesting photographs and a good index. —C.J.L.

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From Bogen-Presto, a gem

THIS is only a booklet but it is worth far more than its price. Its purpose is to provide a basic knowledge of high-fidelity stereo in easily understood language, with readily comprehensible pictures and diagrams.

The scope is quite broad, ranging from the basic theory of sound propagation to the function of components in re-creating sound.

The introduction does a marvelous job of differentiating such terms as high fidelity, binaural, stereophonic, etc. The following section deals with the nature of sounds, frequencies of musical instruments, the phenomena which give instruments their sound characteristics, and the various forms of distortion which mar these characteristics. All the elements of a high-fidelity system and their functions are clearly described, as are also the various stereophonic sources, including FM-AM radio. The theory of stereo records, and their cutting and playing, are covered very, very well.

The record player and tape sections leave something to be desired as far as

completeness is concerned, but the basic points are discussed. However, the sections dealing with the problems of stereo broadcasting, and with stereo tuners and receivers, are extremely enlightening. So is the description of amplifiers and their individual controls. The amplifier theme is thoroughly developed through the several types, the function of stereo amplifiers, and also pre-amplifiers and their evaluation.

The booklet ends with loudspeakers, their theory, their different enclosures, and their operation. Included in this section are suggestions for conducting a "listening test", and a discussion of the effect on the performance of loudspeakers with different room placements.

A very useful glossary of high-fidelity terminology and abbreviations is supplied as an appendix. It was a disappointment to discover that Appendix I, which recommends several stereo high-fidelity systems, makes specific mention of Bogen-Presto products only. Throughout the booklet Bogen amplifiers and Presto turntables are used (along with other components of different manufacture) in illustrations, and one cannot object to this, but the recommendations of Appendix I have a bitter taste. Disregarding this, however, *Understanding High Fidelity* is a gem.—C.V.C.

Understanding High Fidelity—Stereo Edition. Bogen-Presto Division of the Siegler Corp., P.O. Box 500, Paramus, N. J., 25c.

For folklorists, an indispensable guide

ANGLO-AMERICAN FOLKSONG SCHOLARSHIP SINCE 1898, by D. K. Wilgus. Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, xx + 466 pages, \$7.50.

By NORMAN CAZDEN

IT IS customary for a doctoral study to begin with a survey of the literature in the field. Here survey has become sub-

stance, and the result is a monumental running commentary on the last fifty years of research and collection of American folk music. Beyond question this authoritative book establishes itself as a welcome and indispensable guide to anyone wishing to know the subject.

Wilgus' study is far more than an animated bibliography. It deals at length

Our guest reviewer is not only a composer and pedagogue (currently teaching at the New School in New York) but also an

ethnomusicologist, specializing in Americana. He is the author of The Abelard Folksong Book.

with the main theoretical issues and approaches of folksong scholars, and examines the detailed results of their activity. Differing viewpoints are presented fairly, with some leaning towards a latent purism. An alert intelligence and good humor suffuses the criticism, while the writing is generally lucid and well wrought. Where the scope appears confined, the pragmatic emphasis overly prominent, or the purist criteria extreme or inconsistent, these things reflect less failures of insight on the part of the author than limitations imposed by his material. Thus we may anticipate further development of the author's independent position beyond a tailing after work already done.

Excluded from consideration are studies of traditional American music associated with languages other than English, and specifically also discussion of Irish influences. Despite the dedication of the volume to the memory of Phillips Barry, and the nice words about the need for those deeper unified investigations of folksong to which Barry was devoted, musical questions are still handled rather loosely, as has been the wont. A special appendix is devoted to the wrangle over Negro and White spirituals, and this does not veer off into comprehensive discussion of blues and jazz, which would of course require another book. The selective discography, viewed in the light of rapidly changing catalogues, registers recordings deemed of more than ephemeral value. The sampling list stresses editions by Kenneth S. Goldstein, which is all to the good, and while obviously one can easily dissent from individual exclusions or inclusions so overtly dependent upon personal choice, the list surely forms a useful core of an American folksong library on discs.

To this reviewer the most successful portion of Wilgus' book is the history of the "ballad war". Perhaps the role and the full import of Louise Pound's trickle-down theories during that war's major campaign are understated or diverted into complaints about impolitic manners, for whither that warrior led the purists still encamp. Survey of the American and British folksong collections and journals follows in good detail, with on the whole

clear distinctions among various levels of academically-minded, music-centered, casual, and popularly-oriented collections. A further division takes up the lesser theoretical discussions emerging from the debris after the ballad war had ended in a tacit agreement to have done with fruitless thinking and gather the facts.

The wealth of thoughtful exposition and criticism in Wilgus' presentation naturally offers so many opportunities to accede or to disagree, if one wished, as to form another and larger book. It would be pointless to argue at length with what are generally useful and informative views, and which rarely pretend to give the last word. Substantial questions may be raised, however, over the author's acquiescence in the dominant pragmatic trend of academic folksong collections, his reluctance to explore rather than merely to deplore current methods of dissemination of folklore, and his circumscribed approach to Negro folk music.

The pragmatic hypothesis in the study of folksong eschews speculative theory for accumulation of verifiable facts, ultimately requiring that the student be divested of critical faculty and reduced to a recording-machine tender, a tabulator, and a proofreader. Seeming to uphold this pragmatic ideal looking towards objective and unprejudiced collection and classification of the facts, however meaningless, the purist viewpoint in execution shows rather a prior judgment as to which facts meet preconceived standards. The combination tends less to an abstract objectivity than to an ingenuous snobbery and an urge to measure what is most neatly measurable, to examine categories most amenable to categorizing, to identify sources most readily identifiable, and to toss out all the rest as unworthy. Pertinent here is Wilgus' acceptance of such undigested documents as Vance Randolph's Ozark volumes, or of self-conscious and precious archaism from Bascom Lamar Lunsford, as proper folklore, compared with his cavalier dismissal of Carl Sandburg's *American Songbag*, still among the finest, and his failure even to mention Ruth Crawford Seeger's three books of folksongs for children. There are in-

consistencies of attitude towards "authentic" versus arranged, selected, altered, harmonized and collated presentations of folksong, not to say the juke-box re-workings, and Wilgus seems unduly severe regarding the "informality" of John A. Lomax. Just what is a book like *Anglo-American Folksong Scholarship* if not a collation? Folksong scholarship must be broad enough and flexible enough to encompass both the careful and complete documentation of raw archives and examination on their merits of judicious treatments honestly presented as such.

Some errors appear in the otherwise useful glossary of special terms, mostly attributable to that very weakness in the musical preparation of folklorists of which the author complains. The expression *das Volk dichtet* means more nearly "the folk poetizes" than "the folk says". *Gesunkene Kulturgut* might be translated more briefly and accurately as "debased cultural values". *Hexachordal* is but a variant term for *hexatonic*, and is not diatonic, while a hexatonic scale would have only one "gap" or interval larger

than a major second. Similarly, it is possible to use the term *pentachordal* in place of the proper term *pentatonic* to describe a five-tone scale, but neither could possibly pertain to a five-note *diatonic* scale. A *slide* is not a run of accessory notes, except as inadequately rendered on a piano or in staff notation, for it is not made up of discrete pitches. The term *neutral* does not properly describe any and all tones "occurring between standard pitches", certainly not of the tempered scale in particular, nor does it mean any tone indeterminate in staff notation; neither does it signify an interval smaller than a minor second, commonly termed microtone. *Neutral* in this context means specifically the *blue-note*, a relationship falling between the intervals of major and minor thirds, hence neutral as to major-minor modal quality.

Withal, Wilgus' book deserves careful study by anyone wishing proper acquaintance with American folksong and its problems. The field is well covered and the issues raised; we could hardly expect them all to be solved.

Other books received for review

A HISTORY OF WESTERN MUSIC, by Donald Jay Grout. xiv + 742 pages, W. W. Norton & Co., \$8.95.

FRIEDEMANN BACH, by A. E. Brachvogel; translated by Emanuel William Hammer. Pageant Press, \$3.

GIRL SINGER: A Two-Part Invention, by Deborah Ishlon (A Novel). Doubleday, \$3.95.

THE BALLET ANNUAL NO. 14, edited by Arnold L. Haskell. Macmillan, \$6.

AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF MUSIC, by Marc Pincherle; translated by Rollo Myers. Reynal (distributed by Viking), \$18.

BALLET 9, (photographs) by Serge Lido; commentary by Irène Lidova. Macmillan, \$9.

THE AMERICAN BALLET, by Olga Maynard; Foreword by Ted Shawn. Macrae Smith, \$7.50.

A LIFE IN THE THEATRE, by Tyrone Guthrie. McGraw-Hill, \$5.95.

THE PLAY OF DANIEL: A Thirteenth-Century Musical Drama, edited by Noah Greenberg. Oxford University Press, \$5 (also available in paperback \$3.50).

THE PENGUIN BOOK OF ENGLISH FOLK SONGS, edited by R. Vaughan Williams and A. L. Lloyd. Penguin (paperback), 95c.

A CATALOG OF SACRED MUSIC (with supplement), by Lewis M. Kirby, Jr. Available (in ring binder) only from Seminary Book Service, Quaker Lane, Alexandria, Va. Free.

THE JAZZ WORD, by Dom Cerulli, Burt Korall, and Mort Nasatir (and including several essays by various critics, composers, and performers). Ballantine paperback, 50c.

THE LENNON SISTERS: Sweethearts of Song, by A. H. Parr. Doubleday, \$3.75.

BELAFONTE: An Unauthorized Biography, by Arnold Shaw. Chilton, \$3.50.

Vocal Miscellany, Including Reissues

Ave Maria: *The Lost Chord* (Sullivan); *Beautiful Dreamer* (Foster); *Liebestraum* (Liszt); *Songs My Mother Taught Me* (Dvorak); *Serenade* (Drigo); *Ave Maria* (Gounod); *Because* (d'Harlelot); *Angels Guard Thee* (Godard); *Ich liebe dich* (Grieg); *Serse—Largo* (Handel); *None but the Lonely Heart* (Tchaikovsky); *Ave Maria* (Schubert); Murray Dickie (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Hans Hagen. Vox VX-25.210, \$3.98.

▲DICKIE is a Scotchman whose successes have led him from Covent Garden to the Viennese opera. Gifted with an ample voice, he sings evenly throughout an extended range. His top tones have both power and brilliance. Dino Borgioli is named as his teacher, and one wonders if the rather peculiar way in which the singer treats his words may not be to some extent accountable to his non-English training and environment. But certainly this program does not call for extended comment. The songs are all too familiar, and they are orchestrated within a fraction of an inch of their lives. The imaginative treatment given them may be indicated by a simple mention of the harpsichord helping out in Bach's part of the Gounod *Ave Maria*. Do I make the program sound attractive if I say there is no song without its surprises? —P.L.M.

All Time Spanish Favorites: *Marta* (Simons); *Morucha* (Quintero); *Quiereme mucho* (Roig); *Marchita el Alma* (Ponce); *Por eso te quiero* (Lecunona); *Lejos de ti* (Ponce); *La Partida* (Alvarez); *Tus ojos negros* (Falla); *Maitechumia* (Alonso); *Pesares* (Alvarez); *Sombra del Nublo* (Alamo); *Jota* (Falla); Alfredo Kraus (tenor) with Orquesta Montilla conducted by Berlinguer Estela. Montilla FM-152, \$4.98.

Cada cual por su camino (Tientos); *Piedra fria* (Bolero tango); *Como un pañuelo* (Alegrias); *Nadie se meta conmigo* (Serranas); *Nana de Jerez* (Villancico nana); *Debla la Virgen Gitana* (Canción); *Puente de Santa Isabel* (Bolero); *Ay, Virgen de Zamorilla* (Aires Malagueños); *Calla Jilguero!* (Fandangos de Huelva); *La Nina del Amo* (Pasodobles); *Con Persona que tenía* (Fandangos); *Vendiendo alegría* (Canción Tientos); Antonio Molina (singer) with Orquesta Montilla conducted by Maestro Moya. Montilla FM-156, \$4.98.

Fernando Montenegro Sings: *Entregame el alma*; *Engañada*; *Oración Cariba*; *Un Romance*; *Sin saber Porque*; *Una canción para mi pueblo*; *Por tu bien*; *Nieve y carmín*; *Calla corazón*; *El amor ne es eso*; *Quién si no tú*; *Tu piel de jasmín*; Fernando Montenegro (singer) with Orquesta Montilla conducted by Antonio Moya. Montilla FM-148, \$4.98.

▲HERE are three popular favorites who prove, among them, that the gamut of taste in Spain is not so narrow as we might think. Alfredo Kraus has an operatic voice and has sung in opera in England as well as on the continent. In a program such as this he gives himself little opportunity for vocal variety or strong contrast, but then he is hardly the kind of

subtle singer who can make each number stand out. He sings, rather, in a strong, even voice, letting the details take care of themselves. But the voice itself, like those of such Spaniards as Fleta, Lazaro and Cortis, is enough to satisfy his legion of admirers, especially in this repertoire. Molina is a young man who sings in the flamenco style with the curious husky voice quality associated with such music. The oriental floridity and the long closing cadenzas are characteristic, though of course his accompaniment is a modern orchestra instead of the traditional guitar. The singer has appeared in an impressive list of stage shows as well as movies, and he is said to be very popular in Spain. And this is not hard to understand. Much more conservative, or so he seems to my American ears, is Fernando Montenegro, whose voice also is husky, but lower, richer, and deeper. He sings in a conversational manner, and puts his songs over by straightforward expression. The songs themselves are full of Spanish rhythm and color, enhanced by the playing of Moya's orchestra. —P.L.M.

French Music from the Courts of Burgundy and Versailles: Vocal and Instrumental Music by Binchois, Busnois, Dufay, and Barbireau; Instrumental Music by Leclair and Couperin; The Saturday Consort. Classic Editions CE-1037, \$4.98.

Florentine Carnival Songs and Other Music of the Italian Renaissance: Vocal and instrumental music by Anonymous, Pesenti, Isaac, Willaert, de Rore, Cavazzoni, di Ganassi, Dalza; The Antiqua Players. Classic Editions CE-1042, \$4.98.

▲IN spite of the differing nomenclature, the two groups heard here are the same, with roughly identical personnel. In the first record they comprise a tenor and six other instrumentalists; in the second, a mezzo-soprano, a counter-tenor, and four instrumentalists. The guiding spirit in both cases is apparently Colin Sterne, one of the players. One hopes these performers, associated with the University of Pittsburgh, will settle on a consistent group name. But what's in a name? The Brussels or New York Pro Musicas by any other name would sound as sweet. Unfortunately, this new group is hardly on the level of these celebrated competitors: they have none of the refinement and sensitivity of Safford Cape's Pro Musica Antiqua of Brussels, nor the vigor and freshness of Noah Greenberg's New York Pro Musica. Their weakest link is their singing personnel, none of whom are vocalists of really high quality; and though their instrumentalists are good players they lack smoothness of ensemble. This should not discourage their enterprise. Groups of this kind are all too rare as is, and this one is not without promise. For the moment, however, their offerings are of greater interest for the contents than for the performances. The combination of fifteenth-century secular vocal and instrumental music of the Burgundian School with seventeenth-century in-

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strumental music of the French courts of Louis XIV and XV is not particularly logical, but it does offer us some music not generally available elsewhere. The first piece on the second side, by Leclair (*l'ainé*), is listed simply as *Sonata VIII à trois*, which is little help in identifying it among the composer's numerous essays in this form. The upper part was probably conceived for violin, but since the composer frequently designated the flute as an alternative in some of his works, the use of the latter here is not out of place. The Couperin work is his *Deuxième Suite pour deux violi* (in A major). The performances of these two latter works are good, while those of the earlier music on the first side are generally adequate, if not very inspired or inspiring. (In the *Donnes l'assault* of Dufay the "military" allusions of the text are supported by what purports to be a drum but what sounds more like an empty garbage can, and this Department of Sanitation obligato does little service to the music.)

The second of these two records, however, is the more interesting and more successful. The Carnival periods in fifteenth-century Florence bustled with activity, with music actively involved. That phenomenal patron of the arts, Lorenzo di Medici (1448-

1492), "*Il magnifico*", spread his influence here also seeking to elevate the Carnival Songs to a higher artistic level, and frequently writing texts for them himself. As a result, these pieces remain, for all their frequent ribaldry, a rich and colorful reminder of the best in popular art of the 15th Renaissance. It is surprising and disappointing that such a remarkable category of Italian Renaissance music has not been represented until now on records. Actually, only the first three vocal works here belong to this specific idiom. These are: *Canto delle rivenditore*, with a text by Lorenzo himself, *Canto de lanzi allegri*, and *Dal lecto me levava*, the latter—also to be heard on Anthologie Sonore AS-4—based on a saucy pun. While Heinrich Isaac (c. 1450-1517) was employed for a while by the Medici, the other pieces are simply part of the general music of the period. (By the way, there are two *ricercari* for viol on side 2, not one as the jacket states.) The quality of this material is generally high, and while they are still marked by rough spots the performances are quite adequate at worst, quite good at their best. The front cover of this disc is most striking, incidentally: it reproduces six Florentine playing cards (of a set of eight which are sold currently by the Marboro

Book Stores in New York City), and their naughty wittiness is delightfully appropriate.

In both of these recordings a number of the vocal pieces are presented only in part: in such cases the texts are given complete in the accompanying material with the translations of only the sections included. This abbreviation is not ideal, but could be justified if it were done to make space for more music. Unfortunately, this is not the case, for there is no

attempt to take advantage of the extra space gained and these programs are by no means very long. The recorded sound is very fine, and Mr. Sterne's notes, especially for the Italian disc, are very commendable. Thus, while there are definite shortcomings to these releases, they should not negate the fact that a new group of this sort is very welcome. Let us hope that their artistry will mature more fully, and that we will be hearing more from them. —J.W.B.

Eileen Farrell: a singer in the grand manner

PRESS AGENTS have done a thorough job of presenting Eileen Farrell as a simple homebody who would like nothing better than to keep house and just sing for her family. But her public will not allow her to abandon her career. And now, to crown all, she has a Metropolitan contract for next season. Miss Farrell is a singer in the grand manner; her sumptuous tones are made for operas of the classic and high romantic periods. But she can also sing quietly, as the second of these recitals attests. Perhaps it is really her nature never to become too involved emotionally in the music she sings. If there is anything lacking in her singing in these two programs it is a measure of intensity.

I for one am grateful to her for giving us the first adequate modern *Ah, perfido!* Beethoven's concert aria has always been a challenge for big-voiced sopranos, but it has not fared too well on records. Flagstad's version, made in 1937 but only recently reissued on that artist's Camden recital, has remained unsurpassed. Neither Schwarzkopf nor Joan Hammond was in her element in this *scena*; the former lacked sheer bigness of voice and style, the latter seemed reticent about using what she had. There is an acoustic version by Frida Leider, now available on Scala, which gives more than an indication of splendor, though hampered not only by the limitations of the recording (the orchestra is all-important here) but by those of timing as well. Miss Farrell has all the advantages and she is at her best. *Abscheulicher* is equally well done, though the adagio section seems a little casual. The "*Freischütz*" arias suit her less well. Surely Agatha is a

Arias in the Great Tradition: *Ah, perfido!*

"*Fidelio*"—*Abscheulicher, wo eilst du hin* (Beethoven); "*Freischütz*"—*Leise, leise; Und ob die Wolke sie verhülle* (Weber); "*Medea*"—*Solo un pianto* (Cherubini); "*Alceste*"—*Grands Dieux! du destin, qui m'accable* (Gluck); Eileen Farrell (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Max Rudolf. Columbia ML-5408, \$4.98.

Songs and Ballads: *There shall be more joy* (Nordoff); *To the Children* (Rachmaninoff); *The Pasture* (Naginski); *Hickory Hill* (Sargent); *Sing to me, sing* (Homer); *Through the years* (Youmans); *Let my song fill your heart; When I have sung my songs* (Charles); *Danny Boy* (arr. Weatherly); *Down by the Sally Gardens* (arr. Hughes); *The Leprechaun* (arr. Hughes); *May-Day Carol* (arr. Taylor); *The Lamb* (Shaw); *Where is dis road a' leadin' me to?* (Arlen); *Summertime* (Gershwin); Eileen Farrell (soprano); George Trovillo (piano). Angel 35608, \$4.98.

simpler, younger girl than this performance suggests. One thing the artist apparently cannot do is to float her head tones as Tiana Lemnitz did in her famous record of the *Cavatina*. To my ears the "*Medea*" air is the real plum of the program. As it is sung in the opera by *Medea's* companion Neris, this is our first chance to hear it in the Farrell voice. Here is lovely music, sung in pure classic style. In the "*Alceste*" there is some textual blurring; it seems French is not Miss Farrell's best language. This presumably will not affect her performance at the Metropolitan, for the indications are that "*Alceste*" will be sung in English there. The recording balance is satisfactory and the orchestra plays well; if anything one might charge Max Rudolf with perhaps too much attention to details. At one intriguing spot in the "*Fidelio*" aria the bassoon assumes obbligato status, which may be overdoing.

The recital of songs and ballads may be divided into three non-consecutive groups: art songs, arrangements of folk songs, and popular songs. One in this first category has achieved something of the stature of a classic; this is Rachmaninoff's *To the Children*, a meditation at once lyrical and declamatory, in which Rosa Newmarch's English translation matches the vocal line unusually well. This is the most extrovert of Miss Farrell's song interpretations, working up to a strong climax. Her use of *portamento* on the exclamation *Oh children* comes off effectively. The voice is lovely in the Nordoff song, and the rippling piano part is charming, but I found myself turning back for a second playing to catch the import of Ford Madox Ford's text. Naginski's *Pasture*, on Robert Frost's well-known lines, is here conceived in a very girlish mood, with nothing of the sophistication Povla Frijsh used to bring to it. *Hickory Hill*, Paul Sargent's setting of words by Robert Hilkey, is the most modern in feeling of all these songs; I am not sure that the singer has plumbed its depth. Clifford Shaw's hymn-like setting of Blake's *The Lamb* is appealing, and Farrell makes the most of Harold Arlen's pseudo-spiritual. Strangely, it is Sidney Homer's song (text by W. E. Henley) written a couple of generations ago, that comes nearest to defeating the modern singer. Here the voice sounds strained in the high register, and the words do not come through very clearly. Some of the folk songs seem to me over-arranged—contrast Herbert Hughes' *Down by the Sally Gardens* with Benjamin Britten's—and some overweight in performance (I am thinking particularly of *The Leprechaun*). Deems Taylor's smoothly-flowing accompaniment to the lovely old

English *May-Day Carol* is certainly open to the charge of elaboration; still one would gladly accept it if the song were rhythmically less fussy. The popular numbers can hardly ever have been submitted to such singing as this, and the two encores by Ernest Charles (one made so well known by Flagstad) could not ask for more sympathetic treatment.

—P.L.M.

Recital: "Mignon"—*Je suis Titania la blonde* (Thomas); "Les Noces de Jeannette"—*Air du Rossignol* (Massé); "Roméo et Juliette"—*Ah, je veux vivre dans le rêve* (Gounod); "Les Contes d'Hoffmann"—*Les oiseaux dans la charmille* (Offenbach); "Manon"—*Suis-je gentille ainsi*. (Massenet); *La Danza* (Rossini); *La Gitane et l'Oiseau* (Benedict); "La Perle du Brésil"—*Charmant oiseau* (David); *Ciribiribin* (Pestalozza); *Les Filles de Cadix* (Delibes); *Estrellita* (Ponce); Mado Robin (soprano) with Paris Opéra Orchestra, conducted by Pierre Dervaux. Pathé DTX-276, \$5.95.

▲ROBIN has been one of the sensations of postwar Paris, the outstanding French coloratura of recent years. Her chief glory is in her high tones—she ascends several times in this recital to A flat in *alissimo*. The over-all quality of the voice reminds me of Lily Pons, and her approach to the brilliant music which is her specialty suggests the same school. But while Pons did not climb so high, her lower voice, on the other hand, was more pleasingly lyrical. At her best Pons could spin out an effective cantilena; Robin gives no evidence here of ability to move her listeners by the sheer sound of her voice. Nor does she, like the more dazzling of her predecessors, send out showers of apparently spontaneous sparks. Her "Mignon" Polonaise strikes this listener as carefully planned. I never have the feeling that she is just letting the roulades and trills pour out. Her strength and her weakness are apparent in the "Roméo et Juliette" waltz, for so much of this music lies in her lower voice: only in the fine firm high A flat does the singer seem to take fire. Another great test for any lyric-coloratura is *Charmant oiseau*, and it is met with only partial success. *Ciribiribin* needs more lilt than Robin gives it (as in the old Bori record), and *Estrellita* is dressed up rather beyond its nature. To sum up: like so many phenomenally gifted singers, Mlle. Robin has not yet succeeded in matching nature with art.

—P.L.M.

A French-Italian Program: *La Regata Veneziana* (Rossini); *O del mio dolce ardor* (Gluck); *Un certo non so che* (Vivaldi); *Per pietà* (Stradella); *Adieux de l'Hôtesse Arabe* (Bizet); *Ohi quand je dors* (Liszt); *Nicolette* (Ravel); *Kaddisch* (Ravel); *Violon* (Poulenc); *L'Absence* (Berlioz); Jennie Tourtel, mezzo-soprano; Paul Ulanowsky (piano). Decca Stereo DL-710013, \$5.98.

①IT hardly needs saying at this late date that Miss Tourtel ranks high among the most gifted and accomplished singers of her time, or that she makes up her programs with intelligence, imagination, and taste. One is grateful for her once again for her skill in balancing the familiar with the not-so-well-known. The amusing and showy little three-song

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cycle of Rossini is happily followed by the endlessly lovely Gluck, the long-established Liszt and Ravel by the more novel Poulenc. There is not a song on the list that is not thoughtfully and penetratingly presented, knowingly and lovingly interpreted. It would be idle to deny, of course, that some of the bloom has gone from the voice. She is now at a stage where everything must be accomplished by art. Among the admirable features of the disc is the playing of Mr. Ulanowsky.

—P.L.M.

The Art of Song: *Lungi dal caro bene* (Sarti); *A Porfria vecchiarella* (Stradella); *Cara e dolce* (Scarlatti); *Nè me con l'ombre* (Handel); *Le violette* (Scarlatti); *Caldo sangue* (Scarlatti); *Chi vuole innamorarsi* (Scarlatti); *Der Jüngling an der Quelle* (Schubert); *Nacht und Träume* (Schubert); *Der Musensohn* (Schubert); *Dein Angesicht* (Schumann); *An den Sonnenschein* (Schumann); *Du bist wie eine Blume* (Schumann); *I Pastori* (Pizzetti); Cesare Valletti (tenor); Leo Taubman (piano). RCA Victor LM-2280, \$4.98.

▲VALLETTI has given successful recitals in New York, surprising everyone by his tasteful singing of German lieder. For some reason an Italian who can master the German language is a rarity, though it is taken for granted that every German must sing in Italian. Schipa used to include a group of lieder on his recital programs, and for a time Pinza tried it too. Amato sang Amfortas and Kurvenal at the Metropolitan, but these singers were exceptional. Valletti is a vocal aristocrat. He uses his light-textured voice with musicianship and style. He does not require of it more than it can give. His phrasing is graceful and well-turned; he sings rhythmically and holds his songs together. His Italian arias, both the classics and his one modern offering by Pizzetti, are sung with real imagination. *Cara e dolce* is measured and meditative, more so than I remember hearing it before; the lively Handel air and Scarlatti's *Violette* are as light and airy as *Caldo sangue* is sustained. The ornaments in *Lungi dal caro bene* are executed with beautiful neatness. The German songs also are done with great refinement, and they benefit by the easy attractiveness of Valletti's voice, though they are perhaps a little studied.

—P.L.M.

English Lute Songs: Pilkington: *Rest, Sweet Nymphs*; Dowland: *What if I Never Speed?*; *Shall I Sue?*; *Come Again! Sweet Love Doth Now Inrite*; *Me, Me and None But Me*; *Wilt Thou Unkind*; Campian: *Care-Charming Sleep*; *Shall I Come Sweet Love To Thee?*; Rosseter: *When Laura Smiles*; Danyel: *Chromatic Tunes*; Morley: *Will Ye Buy a Fine Dog?*; Anonymous: *Have You Seen But a Whyte Lillie Grow*; **Six In nomines** (by Bull, Tomkins, White, Tye, and Taverner); Alfred Deller (counter-tenor): *Desmond Dupré* (lute); *The In nomine Players*. Vanguard/Bach Guild BG-576, \$4.98.

▲DELLER is, of course, the mainstay in this fine collection of music from 16th- and 17th-century England, and he is in excellent form. For those who would like to have an example of the famous counter-tenor's high artistry and unusual vocal ability I would like to recommend the *Chromatic Tunes*,

Songs for lute, viol, and voice, published in 1600 and written by John Danyel (c. 1565-c. 1630); this is a three-section work, extremely chromatic, and perhaps the high point in the whole collection. My only complaint in this otherwise splendid selection of songs is that the majority of them are slow in tempo. For continuous listening more variety in pacing would have been welcome, particularly inasmuch as Deller handles the coloratura passages in faster songs and arias with such mastery. The six *In nomines* here are polyphonic fantasias for strings, and their name is based on the *cantus firmus* of a Mass by John Taverner at the point where the words *In nomine Domini* appear in the music. It was a very popular form in its day, and composers such as Bull, Blitheman, Parsons, Johnson, Taverner, and Tomkins set them also for virginals and organ. In this recording we hear one each by the composers listed above in the contents with the exception of Christopher Tye who is represented by two *In nomines*. These are all extremely fascinating works which come as a good change of pace to the lute songs. The instruments, which include two viola da braccias, a viola da gamba, and a (presumably baroque) cello, sound satisfactory, but I personally feel that a consort of viols might have made for a more homogeneous ensemble. Recommended.

—I.K.

●
HEUBERGER: "Openball"—*Im Chambre séparé*; **ZELLER:** "Vogelhändler"—*Ich bin die Christl von der Post*; *Schenkt man sich Rosen in Triol*; **LEHAR:** "Zarewitsch"—*Einer wird kommen*; "Der Graf von Luxemburg"—*Hoch Eree, Angele Didier*; **STRAUSS-BENATZKY:** "Casanova"—*Nuns' Chorus*; **MILLOECKER:** "Die Dubarry"—*Ich schenke mein Herz*; *Was ich im Leben beginne*; **SUPPE:** "Boccaccio"—*Fiametta's Song*; **LEHAR:** "Der Graf von Luxemburg"—*Heut noch werd ich Ehefrau*; **ZELLER:** "Obersteiger"—*Sei nicht böse*; **LEHAR:** "Giuditta"—*Meine Lippen, sie küssen so heiss*; **SIECZYNSKY:** *Wien, du Stadt meiner Träume*; Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano) with Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Otto Ackermann. Angel 35696, \$4.98.

▲HERE is a feast for Miss Schwarzkopf's fan club—a program of thirteen smash hits, sung with the soprano's familiar polish and accompanied in the true Viennese manner by the orchestra and occasional chorus. There can be no doubt that the singer is having a grand time singing these insinuating melodies. And it is good to hear again several old but neglected favorites. The *Nun's* Chorus achieved international fame back in the thirties largely through the recording of Anni Frind. Naturally a great deal more can be made of the background of chorus, orchestra and organ nowadays, and no tricks have been missed. The zany effect of all this piety in waltz time is ever delightful. Another favorite of my own in *Hab' ich nur deine Liebe* from "Boccaccio", a touchingly beautiful melody. Here again, with modern recording, a nice effect is added by the chiming of church bells at the end. The program is crowned by *Wein, du Stadt meiner Träume* which, as the notes explain, is not from an operetta, but sums up the spirit of all that has gone before.

—P.L.M.



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Operatic Recital: "Aida"—*O patria mia*; "I Vespri Siciliani"—*Mercè dilette amiche* (Verdi); "Norma"—*Casta diva* (Bellini); "Agnes von Hohenstaufen"—*O Re dei cieli* (Spontini); "Nabucco"—*Anch' io dischiostro un giorno* "Ernani"—*Ernani, involami* (Verdi); "Tosca"—*Vissi d'arte* (Puccini); "Forza del Destino"—*Pace, pace, mio Dio* (Verdi); Anita Cerquetti (soprano) with the Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino conducted by Gianandrea Gavazzeni. London Stereo OS-25100, \$5.98.

THIS recital was first released when Cerquetti was much in the news, having replaced Callas at the opera in Rome and made a good impression in Chicago. Reviewing the record in these columns, August 1957, I found the singing more promising than finished. It seems to me rather unfortunate that we have not been given a chance to appraise her more recent achievements rather than this repeat of an early effort. My reactions on listening to it again (with the added dimension of stereo) are much as they were before. Cerquetti is (or was) a singer who gives you all she has, with little restraint or reserve. She has attempted several big and showy arias, for which nature has well endowed her, but she does not quite carry them off. In the "Norma", "Ernani", and "Nabucco" arias she omits the florid *cabalettas*. The "Vespri Siciliani" requires the kind of brilliance she has spared herself in these cases, and here she maintains a rather slow and careful tempo. The scene from "Agnes von Hohenstaufen", the real novelty of the program, is a grand passionate scene, and Cerquetti keeps it loud and sustained. Her best singing is done in *Vissi d'arte*, for here the voice simply rides the crest of the orchestra. Comparing the two versions of the recital, I do not find that stereophonic sound has been kind to her voice. —P.L.M.

German Songs of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance:

Secular and sacred songs by Anonymous, Heinrich Isaak, Walther von der Vogelweide, Arnolt Schlick, Ludwig Senfl, Johann Walther, Hans Sachs, Heinrich Albert, and Hans Folz; Hugues Cuénod (tenor), Hermann Leeb (lute). Westminster XWN-18848, \$4.98.

▲FOR me, Cuénod is one of those rare singers who can just about do no wrong. Though his voice is a small—almost weak—one, of limited color, he has a sense of style and taste that are practically flawless. He is by far one of the finest interpreters of early vocal music active today. His records for Westminster, with the admirable lutenist Leeb, of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century music of various schools, are magnificent accomplishments. I have always been most fond of his English program (XWN-18653, with French Songs), but his other collections of Italian and Spanish (18654), Italian (18776), and French (18683) pieces are also delightful. This newest program is in the best of his traditions. The material covers a wider period than any of these earlier discs, some of the music going back to the thirteenth century. What is most fascinating about these selections is that the most interesting historically often make the most satisfying or enjoyable listening musically. Such are, for example, the haunting *Palestinalied* of the early

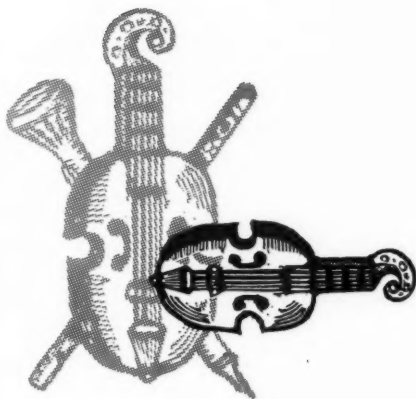
thirteenth century German poet Walther von der Vogelweide; the vernacular sacred song by Hans Sachs (this was the real Hans Sachs, 1494-1576, on whom Wagner's character was based); and the pieces by Ludwig Senfl, whom Luther admired so much, and whose *Die weyber mit den löhen* is a fine example of the rowdy anti-Papalism of the sixteenth-century Lutherans. There are also songs like Isaak's *Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen* and Schlick's *Maria zart*, which were used as material for the sacred polyphony of "parody Masses" of the sixteenth century. There are also German chorale tunes, like Johann Walther's famous *Christ lag in Todesbanden*, given simply as melody and lute accompaniment in these treatments, as they might well have been done in sixteenth-century Lutheran homes. In short, this new release is a treasure trove, chock full of proofs that scholarship and perfect style can go hand in hand with inspired artistry. Excellent recording. And bless Westminster for including every single text with translation, and even a few introductory notes, on the back of the jacket. To be sure, they are set in a microscopic type that may strain many an eye, but the strain is worth it. —J.W.B.

●
Sur Deux Nattes: Johnny Boy; Dix-huit ans; Gentil Camarade; Nativité; La petit Danois; Dans les trains, dans les gares; La Croisade des Enfants; Une Guitare, une vie; Le Petit Prince; Les Petites Pestes; A Waterloo; Crétulité; Mes Vrais Amis; Le Mariage des Oiseaux; Marie-Josée Neuville (voice and guitar). Pathé ATX-122, \$5.95.

▲NEUVILLE, who writes her own songs, has a husky, insinuating voice and such diction that even one who does not understand the words she sings could very probably write them down. The record, needless to say, is for those who do understand the wit and suggestion that is in them. The artist's manner of singing to the guitar, I should say, is not without American influence, though her songs are as French as *La Marseillaise*. —P.L.M.

●
Paul Robeson in Carnegie Hall: Every time I feel the spirit (arr. Brown); Balm in Gilead (arr. Burleigh); Volga Boat Song; Othello—Monologue (Shakespeare); O Thou Silent Night (Alexandrov); Chinese Children's Song; My Curly-Headed Baby (Clutsam); Old Man River (Kern); Going Home (Dvorak-Fisher); "Boris Godunov"—Monologue (Mussorgsky); The Orphan (Mussorgsky); Christ lag in Todesbanden (Bach); Didn't my Lord Deliver Daniel (arr. Brown); Lullaby (Schubert); O No, John (arr. Sharp); Joe Hill (Robinson); Jacob's Ladder; Paul Robeson (basso); Alan Booth (piano). Vanguard Stereo VSD-2035, \$5.95.

THIS is, of course, an on-the-spot recording, with applause and announcements by the singer. As in his Monitor recital (reviewed in the October, 1959, ARG) the Robeson voice still impresses by its richness and its unique sheen; and again one notes that the singer is careful always to sing his songs in keys that will not tax the upper limits of his range. In doing this, indeed, he sometimes shows us rather surprisingly just how far down his seemingly bottomless voice can actually go. The program, ob-



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viously much appreciated by his Carnegie Hall audience, is not so much varied as miscellaneous, ranging from several of the spirituals on which his reputation as a singer was built (and which he still sings extremely well) to several lullabies which always seem to come strangely from so masculine a voice as his. He recites the final monologue from Shakespeare's *Othello*, apparently as an encore, having set the stage with a verbal introduction; and he leads into the prayer from "*Boris Godunov*" with a reading of the text, both in English and Russian. When he sings a Russian song, or one in any foreign language, he likes to mix in some English for the benefit of those who do not understand the original. Two special Robeson favorites conclude the program—two that figured also on the Monitor program—Joe Hill and Jacob's Ladder, in the latter of which he successfully invites the audience to join. The balance in this recording is much more realistic than in the Monitor.

—P.L.M.

I Do Believe: *Walk in the Sunlight of His Love; I Cried Holy; I'll Fly Away; I'll Be Caught up to Meet Him; Never Peace of Mind; When He Sets Me Free; Roll, Jordan, Roll; King Jesus Is All; Jesus Is Willing; Waiting for Me; I Do Believe; Coming Home; Back Home Choir.* RCA Victor LPM-1857, \$3.98.

▲THE Back Home Choir had its beginnings in the Abyssinian Baptist Church of Newark, New Jersey. Its guiding spirit is Rev. Charles Banks, who has carefully selected its sixty voices. The singing of the group is representative of the contemporary gospel style, combining the overwhelming spirit and the terrific tension that for so long has characterized Negro congregational singing and the modern blues idiom. This is the music of a religion highly charged with emotion, unabashedly extrovert, triumphantly positive. The chief soloists, Carrie Smith and Robert Ross, are not the least potent forces in the choir.

—P.L.M.

Operatic Arias: "*Traviata*"—*Ah, fors' e lui* (Verdi); "*Puritani*"—*Qui la voce* (Bellini); "*Lucia*"—*Il dolce suono* (Donizetti); "*Barbiere di Siviglia*"—*Una voce poco fa* (Rossini); "*Turandot*"—*Signore, ascolta; T che di gel sei cinta; "Madama Butterfly"*—*Un bel di vedremo* (Puccini); "*Mefistofele*"—*L'altra notte in fondo al mare* (Boito); "*Gianni Schicchi*"—*O mio babbino caro* (Puccini); Renata Scotto (soprano) with Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Manno Wolf-Ferrari. Angel 35735, \$4.98.

▲IT is good to have the latest soprano sensation in a varied program. I can hardly say, however, that she begins with her best foot forward. Though her voice has ample range, with a more solid quality in the upper reaches than is usual in a coloratura soprano, she is at her best in the less florid portions of her recital. *Ah, fors' e lui* must be the most difficult of all her numbers, and her execution of the fioratura is not too tidy. I was especially conscious in this aria of her habit of hitting the notes not quite squarely in the middle. A more serious fault is the singer's lack of a sense of the whole; each individual phrase takes all Miss Scotto's attention. *Qui la voce*, with its straight legato singing, is better done,

but the *Vien diletto* portion is again a little crude. The "*Lucia*" excerpt takes in all the first part of the *Mad Scene* and, skipping the intervening dialogue, *Spargi diamaro pianto*. Again I miss a sense of purpose in the cadenza and I find her trills disappointing. *Una voce poco fa* finds the lady better suited to its archness than she has been to the foregoing tragedy. But as might have been expected from the first she is best in the Puccini numbers. *Un bel di* is really quite fine. Here she manages to suggest a characterization.

—P.L.M.

Italian Songs: *Lungi dal caro bene* (Sarti); *Pupille nere* (Buononcini); *Chi vuole innamorarsi* (Scarlatti); *Che fiero costume* (Legrenzi); *Caro mio ben* (Giordani); *O bellissimi capelli* (Falconieri); *Tu lo sai* (Torelli); *Nel cor più non mi sento* (Paisiello); *Oblivion soave* (Monteverdi); *Donzelle, fuggite* (Cavalli); *Lasciatemi morire* (Monteverdi); *Alma mia* (Handel); Ezio Pinza (basso); Fritz Kitzinger (piano). RCA Camden CAL-539, \$1.98.

▲ORIGINALLY released in 1941 on three 78 r.p.m. discs as Victor M-766, this program of classic airs also has been offered previously on LP, combined with Pinza's rather unfortunate Mozart duets with Rethberg, as LCT-1031. Although there are well-known exceptions, it is generally true that the greatest lieder singers are German-born, and that French songs are best interpreted by Frenchmen. Yet it does not follow that a singer's Italian heritage insures success in the wonderful repertoire of the old Italian air. Pinza was a great opera singer and a musical one; perhaps he belonged too definitely to the traditions of the opera house to concern himself greatly with the older styles. To be sure, two of his greatest roles were in Mozart operas, but this is hardly a passport into the land of Handel, Sarti, and Buononcini. It should in all fairness be noted that like most singers of his type and school, Pinza drew his classic arias from collections made a generation or two ago for use in the recital hall by editors whose aim was to make the airs into effective art songs, to provide them with piano accompaniments that take little account of the original style of the music. If we accept such arrangements (and we have long been used to them) we can admire Pinza's legato, his musical phrasing, his diction. Perhaps the voice itself was a little too rich and full, a little ponderous for the sentiments and the melodies he sings. At any rate he is best in such sustained melodies as *Caro mio ben*, a little on the heavy side for *Lungi dal caro bene*, not quite able to match the light-hearted humor of *Nel cor più non mi sento*. Yet *Che fiero costume* and *Donzelle fuggite* do have the spark of life.

—P.L.M.

Russian Orthodox Church Music: *Te Deum; Great Vespers;* Cathedral Choir of the Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral of New York City conducted by Nicholas Afonsky. Westminster WXX-18816, \$4.98.

▲AFONSKY and his choir are rendering a real service in recording so much of the traditional and established repertory of the Russian Orthodox Church. Opportunities to hear this music in its original form and setting are not too frequent in this country. Some parts of the services are familiar in

American choir lofts by way of translated arrangements, and opera-goers may recognize some of the off-stage music in "Boris Godunov". It is all very solemn music, very dignified and impressive. I suspect it has not been easy to assemble and train such a choir as this is New York City, and that the singers are by average not very young. This would account for the vibrancy of their tones. —P.L.M.

Elizabethan and Jacobean Ayres, Madrigals and Dances: Vocal and instrumental music by Morley, Dowland, Byrd, Hume, Gibbons, Copernicus, Jones, Farmer, Anonymous, and Campian; The New York Pro Musica directed by Noah Greenberg. Decca Stereo 79406, \$5.98.

THE only really unusual feature on this release is that four of the six madrigals included are sung with instrumental doubling. This is rarely done nowadays in live or recorded performances. But it was a common practice in the days when this music

was new, and Greenberg's group does it tastefully and with an authentic variety of instrumental colors. This ensemble adds more laurels to its collection with some crisp and vigorous performances here. The only major duplication on this disc is that of Gibbons' *The Cries of London*. Owners of the Deller Consort recording on Decca Archive (ARC-3053) will notice a few slight differences in the test and voice distributions. Greenberg's singers enter into the fun with verve and gusto, while Deller's group is a trifle more restrained. But any possible comparison of performances—the differences in quality are negligible—is made pointless by the advantage here of stereo, which spreads the voices out in a vivid illusion far more suggestive of cries in the street than any monophonic sound could do. Whereas in most of the rest of this disc stereo is but a pleasant if expendable embellishment, here it performs a vital service. The sound is just a trifle fuzzy, though, in the inner grooves. The program is

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for the most part excellently selected from generally unfamiliar material. Most amusing is *Tobacco* by the curious Tobias Hume (d. 1645), a quaint soldier and musician whom some scholars believe may have been the model for Shakespeare's character, Sir Andrew Aguecheek. This de-luxe album is again one of the double sleeves with a bound-in leaflet. The texts of the vocal pieces are given, along with virtually all of their source references; but most of the latter are not given. There is no excuse for lumping groups of pieces onto a few big bands instead of separating them individually; inevitably owners of the disc will want to pick and choose from it for themselves. In general, however, this is a splendid record, one that will delight admirers of this ensemble and mollify its most severe critics.

—J.W.B.

DONIZETTI: "La Favorita"—*Ange si pur;* **GOUNOD:** "Roméo et Juliette"—*Ah, live-toi, soleil;* "Mireille"—*Anges du paradis;* "La Reine de Saba"—*Inspirez-moi;* **REYER:** "Sigurd"—*Entrée de Sigurd;* **BIZET:** "Carmen"—*Romance de la fleur;* **THOMAS:** "Mignon"—*Elle ne croyait pas;* **ADAM:** "Si j'étais Roi"—*J'ignore son nom;* **MASSENET:** "Werther"—*Un autre est son époux;* "Werther"—*Pourquoi me reveiller;* "Manon"—*Ah, fuyez, douce image;* **DELIBES:** "Lakmé"—*Fantaisie aux divins mensonges;* **WAGNER:** "Lohengrin"—*Ah respirez;* **MASCAGNI:** "Cavalleria Rusticana"—*Sicilienne;* **LEONCAVALLO:** "Pagliacci"—*Me grimer;* **GIORDANO:** "Fedora"—*Aid de Loris;* Emile Scaremberg (tenor). Roco R-18, \$5.95

▲SCAREMBERG had a rather brief career, from 1893 to 1907, but his success was brilliant enough to establish him firmly among the immortals. He recorded for Fonotipia and Odeon in 1905 and 1906. His voice would seem to have been of impressive size, and though he began as a lyric tenor he was later to expand his repertoire even to include some Wagner. His records have been much sought after. They show the explicitly French combination of a soft vocal quality with generous power that enabled singers of his type to sing roles of varied types. It is difficult to single out individual numbers from this program as outstanding, for the singing is generally consistent; it never falls below a good standard. If there is a prevailing weakness in this program I would say it is a tendency to sing the arias broadly, sometimes without much spark. This is true of *Pourquoi me reveiller* and *Ah, fuyez*. *Ah, live-toi, soleil* is a half-tone low in pitch. —P.L.M.

●
DONASTIA: *Venerabilis barba Capuccinorum;* **REBOUD:** *Bueno del angel;* **GRAU:** *Cantares de los pajes de la nao;* **DUO VITAL:** *Mozuca;* *Per a Sant Antoni;* *The ater deg;* **ARMA:** *Ukrainiana;* **FALLA:** *Cancion;* *Polo;* *El Paño moruno;* *Nana;* *Jota;* **SCHINDLER:** *Serenata;* **POWER:** *Los Cantos Canarios;* Agrupacion Coral de Pamplona de Espana conducted by Luis Morondo. Columbia ML-5278, \$3.98.

▲THE Pamplona choir, now making its first appearance on the Columbia label, was heard in America last season. Several of their earlier recorded programs have been issued in this country by

Westminster. A group of entirely non-professional, part-time singers, these artists bow to none of our most highly trained choral organizations; at the same time they lack that last degree of slickness which so often works against American choruses. There is certainly no lack of virtuosity here, however. The program seems to have been picked with an eye to the box office, the Falla songs in particular being given elaborate and ear-filling treatment. The various solo voices are pleasant and always well in the picture.

—P.L.M.

●
PALESTRINA: *Alma Redemptoris;* **VICTORIA:** *Tantum ergo;* **ARCADELT:** *Ave Maria;* **WEELKES:** *Welcome, Sweet Pleasure;* **MORLEY:** *April is in my mistress' face;* **GIBBONS:** *The Silver Swan;* **MORLEY:** *Now is the month of Maying;* **FOLK SONG, FRENCH:** *From Lyons as I journeyed;* **FOLK SONG, FINNISH:** *Tuku, tuku, tuu, I'm calling;* **CAROL, ENGLISH:** *I saw three ships;* **RUBBRA:** *The Virgin's Cradle Hymn;* **BOUGHTON:** *The holly and the ivy;* **BOROWSKI:** *O softly sighing lute;* *Winter and spring;* Paulist Choristers of Chicago, conducted by Father O'Malley. EFOM-100, \$4.98.

▲WE may take this to be a typical Paulist Choristers' program, varied in spirit and balanced between sacred and secular music. The singing of the Palestrina and Victoria motets is full-throated and spirited. The *Ave Maria* doubtfully attributed to Arcadelt is treated almost like plainsong, with great rhythmic freedom. The madrigals and various folksongs are pleasantly flavored by the quality of the boys' voices, and the modern pieces that finish the program provided a note of novelty. The Finnish folksong will bring back memories of Marian Anderson.

—P.L.M.

●
Neapolitan Songs by the Immortals: *Nun me scetò* (Tagliaferri); Aureliano Pertile. *La Serenata* (Mascagni); Giacomo Lauri-Volpi. *Mamma mia che vo sape* (Nutille); Tino Pattiera. *Aprile* (Tosti); Fernando de Lucia. *La Mia Canzone* (Tosti); Enrico Caruso. *Santa Lucia*; Tito Schipa. *L'Ultima Canzone* (Tosti); Nino Piccaluga. *Core n'grato* (Cardillo); Enzo de Muro Lomanto. *Luna d'Estate* (Tosti); Giacomo Lauri-Volpi. *Marechiaro* (Tosti); Tito Schipa. *Nina* (Pergolesi); Alessandro Bonci. *Carmela* (Cannio); Fernando de Lucia. *Ninetta*; Giovanni Zenatello. *Non t'amo più* (Denza); Enrico Caruso. *Musica proibita* (Gastaldon); Aureliano Pertile. Eterna 728, \$5.95.

▲THIS is a strangely planned program, to say the least. Seven of the composers' names given above are not included in the label copy; another is a correction—the *Serenata* sung by Lauri-Volpi is not by Tosti. (To complete the record, I have left *Santa Lucia* anonymous and I do not know who wrote *Ninetta*.) Taken for what it purports to be, the record can hardly be considered seriously; just how do Tosti songs qualify indiscriminately as Neapolitan, to say nothing of our old friend *Nina*. No, what value the selection has is in the reputations of the singers and their performances in these songs. Most of them, I must concede, are heard to better

advantage on other LP's. Pertile and Lauri-Volpi, for example, are much more effective in opera, though these performances are not unrepresentative. I could hardly say this much for the Zenatello effort, and as for Schipa (whose voice I know well) I would hardly recognize him at all. The "find" of the disc is Enzo de Muro Lomanto, here called "greatest of de Lucia's pupils," who sings *Core 'ngrato* with such art that for the moment one can forget the famous Caruso record. De Lucia himself stands out among all these fellow tenors as the polished and stylish (though willful) artist he was, and Bonci's *Nina*, though also rather free, is quite beautiful. Along with these the two early examples of Caruso, so full of eloquent and exuberant life, are the best justification of the program.

—P.L.M.

The Armenian Mass (Badarak); The Cosmopolitan Choral conducted by Florence Mardirosian, with Arshavir Danikian (Deacon), and Jacques Artinian (tenor). Westminster XWN-18726, \$4.98.

▲EPITOMIZING the projection of religious experience, the church music of an unfamiliar heritage is herein translated into something so beautiful that the listener feels he must be part Armenian. And while too-close microphoning magnifies the more wooden of the basses in some of the choral sections, this is offset by the over-all reverence and particularly by the long and graceful vocal line of Jacques Artinian and the straightforward serenity of Dracon Danikian.

—J.B.L.

DUNAYEVSKY: *Song of Youth*; **FOLKSONG:** *A Birch tree in a field did stand*; **NOSOV:** *Far away*; **FOLKSONG:** *Volga Boat Song*; **MOK-ROUSOV:** *You are always beautiful*; **FOLKSONG:** *Along Peter's Street*; **JUDGE:** *Tipperary*; **FOLKSONG:** *Kalinka*; *Bandura*; *Oh, no! John*; *Snow Flakes*; **ALEXANDROV:** *Ukrainian Poem*; **SHAPORIN:** *Soldiers' Chorus*; *Soviet Army Chorus and Band*; Colonel Boris Alexandrov, conductor. Angel Stereo 35411, \$5.98.

⑤**THE Soviet Army Chorus** is a virtuoso group on the order of the Don Cossacks, though they do not go in quite so heavily for trick effects. Everything about their performances is precise, polished, and earnest. Here they sing a program made up mostly of modern Russian compositions and folksongs (in rather elaborate arrangements) in most cases for chorus, some with soloists and one by a bass-baritone alone. The contemporary works are all very much in the old familiar pattern: what puts them over is the great conviction with which they are sung. The *Volga Boat Song* is given in a manner that recalls Chaliapin; *Along Peter's Street* is another of that artist's songs in which he is well remembered (some may know the tune better as it appears in Stravinsky's *Petrushka*). It is amusing, at least while the novelty is fresh, to hear these Russians sing *Tipperary* partly in Russian, and partly in strongly accented English. *Oh, no! John*, a solo, is kept pretty straight in delivery. In the choral numbers, when the going gets exciting, use is made of boisterous whistling effects.

—P.L.M.

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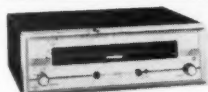
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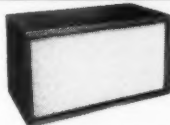
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ly constructed is not an aesthetic judgment; my recognition that the fugue in "*Falstaff*" is grand, is. And, in turn, this recognition is produced, shaped and modified by a galaxy of non-musical and musical (and always consequential) circumstances which must be taken into account and which, as it happens, are deeply germane to Indian musical theory.

Music, like abstract painting, awakens in us various relationships. This may be, psychologically, because it correlates comparatively simple emotions with the divers objects which inspire them. Possibly, the Sixth Symphony of Beethoven vitalizes exactly those emotions which come to me upon approaching an especially succulent greensward and then the cerebral cortex (unaware of the strictures of German musicology) makes the connection. Possibly, too, Composer X's toccata does the same thing and I call it pastoral and envision (but do not admit) lambskins frolicking in a meadow.

We can put this more formally. The consecutive experience of a given music yields it, after a while, a hierarchy of meaning, ranging from the very precise (the military implications of fanfares, for instance) to the very vague (an adjective such as 'jolly' or 'gloomy' which then brings a chain of associations in train).

The precision of the literary configuration is beside the point. The presence of a detailed program is not *per se* grounds for objection, if it elucidates the comprehension of the musical experience. No particular premium attaches to "abstract" music.

If, for example, *Don Quixote* arouses analogous, Quixote-esque feelings or images in a listener—with or without literary support—it has established for the particular listener its legitimacy.

Put the other way to, it is quite likely that *Don Juan* without notes or title may not lead the listener directly to the amorous cavalier (no more may "*Don Giovanni*" deprived of language and Milton Cross). But if we mistake the great leaping horn theme as something other than a gulp of passion we have somewhat

misunderstood our own musical vocabulary.

The degree of relatedness is no more urgent than it is in a Rorschach test. Suffice it to say, it is there, and it is relevant.

Many readers will already know how highly the relatedness of *rāgas* is regarded by Indian musical philosophers and theoreticians. Many will have also seen some of the charming and moving *ragini* pictures which seek to evoke visually and precisely the moods of specific *rāgas*. And Indian musical theory is filled with exact descriptions of *rāga*-referents which note an emotional divergence immediate upon a tonal divergence of even a quarter-tone, or a single inverted note.

To be sure, Western music rarely follows the Indian procedure of trying to plumb one emotion to its ultimate depths. On the contrary, it usually contrasts emotions (thus the significance of key changes) and some extended pieces even attempt an entire cosmos; creating, as it were, a tonal *Weltanschauung*.

This emotional referent to extra-musical concepts is also calibrated to time. *Rāgas* are repeatedly associated with certain hours of the day, as well as to certain moods. Any reader who has had to listen to the *Pathétique* Symphony, or one of the tinkly-jangly effusions of minor court composers immediately upon arising, without even a first cup of coffee, will understand the logic of this structure. The more orderly and regular our lives, the more we are sensitive to the chronological appositeness of particular music.

In actual listening, too, we do not proceed on a straight line. The mind piles up analytical notes ("the first theme is returning"), emotional tangents ("that reminds me of Mabel"), and even orthodox criticism ("Markevitch does it better"). Our familiarity also interposes referents. In short, an actual map of our closest attention would (and should) produce a stream of consciousness which would make Molly Bloom's soliloquy appear an exercise in sober logic. Length, the environment, our sense of ceremonial, our total constellation of sensations and re-

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WIESBADEN	MAY 1 - MAY 19
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STOCKHOLM	MAY 28 - JUNE 14
VIENNA	MAY 28 - JUNE 26
ZURICH	JUNE 1 - JUNE 30
HELSINKI	JUNE 7 - JUNE 18
STRASBOURG	JUNE 9 - JUNE 23
HOLLAND	JUNE 15 - JULY 15
GRANADA	JUNE 24 - JULY 4
AIX-EN-PROVENCE	JULY 9 - JULY 31
DUBROVNIK	JULY 10 - AUGUST 24
BAYREUTH	JULY 23 - AUGUST 25
SANTANDER	JULY 25 - AUGUST 31
ATHENS	AUGUST 1 - SEPTEMBER 15
MUNICH	AUGUST 7 - SEPTEMBER 9
LUCERNE	AUGUST 13 - SEPTEMBER 7
BESANCON	SEPTEMBER 1 - SEPTEMBER 11
VENICE	SEPTEMBER 12 - SEPTEMBER 26
PERUGIA	SEPTEMBER 18 - OCTOBER 2
BERLIN	SEPTEMBER 18 - OCTOBER 4

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sources, are all contributory to our response. The attention-span is never constant. It wavers, expands, diminishes and chases up side roads.

In other words, two counter-effects operate in music-listening and music-judging. One is the degree to which the music can impose its feeling-tone upon the auditor. The other, the receptiveness *totally* of the auditor to that feeling-tone, in that time, at that place. The listener who *selects*—the owner of a decent record collection, for example—does so largely out of the second instance. There are moments when "Mam'zelle Angot" is irrefutably a great piece of music while "Tristan" as definitely is not. The critic who discounts those moments cannot pride himself on sagacity and high seriousness: he has merely made an error in *Realpolitik*.

The imposition of criteria upon musical style is a social, not a musical, gesture, and one which is mainly inhibiting. That we accept the notion of progress in style as an imperative, is a merry delusion. A music may continue indefinitely constant to one stylistic tradition. A composer may, if he wishes, content himself with

the musical materials of the 18th century and no more, just as the delightful van Meegeren contented himself painting Vermeers. (We are not considering, of course, the *economic* value of the product.) The imperative of chromatic progression so brilliantly argued by Dika Newlin in her book *Bruckner, Mahler, Schönberg*, is simply a Hegelian fiction, acceptable at will but not mandatory. It has no more substance than the arguments for neo-classicism.

Clearly, if we today are attached to Mozart, the argument that present-day composers cannot be (if they choose) Mozartean is insubstantial. The style is bound to no dicta; within history, it is a product of pluralism.

Facing the position of the artist is more difficult since for us the performer and the creator are (for the most part) separated.

Still, what makes the artist is not only his art but also his presence. We struggle, most of us, to *see* a great man, and we seem to feel that merely being in his presence has its own spiritual reward. When we ask, as ask we must, what made Toscanini able to accomplish his particular

prodigies, we are best served by a Sanskrit term, *darshan*. The *darshan* of a man is that which he, by existing and by past known accomplishment, is able to transmit to others merely by virtue of his presence. It is a term for a vague feeling we have all experienced which at once defines it. When the millions gathered to see Gandhi's withered body drawn to its cremation, they were seeking a last *darshan* from the Mahatma, a sense of spiritual enrichment simply from having been "in the presence".

The *da shan* of the artist is felt alike in his person and in his art. It is *darshan*, more than technical substance, which gives to the respondent the sense of form, personality and high emotional catharsis.

Darshan, then, as a quality, prepares us for the art or, in a broader sense, for a further experience. It is a quality which calls for more study; *darshan*, it would seem, can repose in inanimate objects as well.

Ours is a noisy culture. Its most sinful, reprehensible and musical object is the telephone. Characteristically, its diabolical purveyors have attached no device to shut the thing off, though this, one imagines, would be the first thing they should have thought about.

We live amongst incessant noises, some of which we call music. There is far too much music, heard far too randomly. Consider Muzak. For a hundred lira, I can wave Italian café musicians away from my table if the mood is not on me. Nothing turns off Muzak. Nothing turns off the relentless mangle of jazz of which the plebs make much. The lady next door and I share most of her entertainments.

Consider the phonograph. The appreciation of music has been more thoroughly damaged by this malevolent mechanism than by brigades of music appreciation teachers. Its advantage is obvious: the phonograph (as Partch long ago pointed out) obviates any intermediary. All music is in its ken. The listener with enough money and patience can, without ever learning to read a note, be a superb historian of music, an informed and perceptive critic, a connoisseur of the most esoteric and a de-

votee of the most familiar.

But a flaw arises somehow. The natural desire to perfect the mechanism becomes an obsession. The mechanism itself replaces life. The hum of grooves takes pride of place; steam whistles roar through the living room and gigantic violas swing from speaker to speaker. The recorded performance becomes the standard, replacing the live and actual.

And that abundance, so productive in one way, tends, after a while, to blur and numb the sensibilities, so that music which should be sharp and poignant becomes a bath of warm, never-ceasing treacle. And the noise becomes the greatest stillness.

Someone once suggested that prefaced to every piece of criticism should be a note informing the reader of the state of the author's digestion while he wrote.

The caution is unnecessary. The critic's mentor, as I have noted, is the Devil, and Beelzebub is notorious for taking care of his own. He must, as we have seen, because of the paradoxical irrelevance and necessity of criticism to music. The critic is a partial respondent. When we admire him as critic, we are, in effect, admiring a sensibility which is like our own.

We must not, however, confuse criticism with music, nor take too seriously even that criticism which extends and ramifies the full range of sensuous delights which music affords.

It is music, itself and alone, sound to ear with the single auditor, which is quintessential. Everything which has led up to the musical moment has a history and is relevant to the experience to come. At the moment of music, the listener is entitled to a profound conviction that he shares what he enjoys. But the experience itself is and must be private. He can only talk about it later.

Yet, curiously, only with the widest accounting of every factor can the real experience of the music occur. While music itself possesses an interior relatedness which makes it its own language, the effort at translation makes us newly aware that (as Dr. Johnson said of opera) music is—and this is its strength—"an Exotic and Irrational Entertainment".

Heston as Bible reader: uncommon skill

The Five Books of Moses from the Holy Bible: "In the Beginning" & "Out of Egypt"; Charlton Heston (Reader); Robert DeCormier Chorale. Vanguard VRS-9060/1, \$9.96, or Stereo VSD-2049/50, \$11.90.

Ⓔ THESE two discs, available separately or together in an album, consist of a dramatized reading of selections from the first five books of the Old Testament, otherwise known as the Pentateuch or the Torah. Specifically, the first record includes the complete Creation myth through the expulsion from the Garden of Eden, the stories of Cain and Abel, Noah, Abraham and Isaac, and a passing reference to Joseph. The second record, dominated by the figure of Moses, is devoted to a fairly complete account of the captivity and release of Israel, their forty year's wandering, and the entry into the land of Canaan. Charlton Heston, well known for his movie portrayal of Moses, is an exceptionally suitable choice for the narrator: his rich, sonorous voice is heard to marvelous effect in the various characterizations involved, whether as an omnipotent sounding God, a fearful Adam, a somewhat shrewish Eve (her dialogue with the serpent is ingeniously accomplished), an extremely snide snake, or any

one of the many, many personages, including, of course, Heston's familiar interpretation of Moses and his reverent rendering of the over-all narration. Interspersed at appropriate moments in the text are spirituals sung with enormous enthusiasm and artistry by the Robert DeCormier Chorale. These arrangements are extremely tasteful, and although it appears difficult before hearing these records to realize how this particular type of musical background can fit into the subject matter, the effect is simply stunning. Vanguard would be well advised to do more recording with this excellent group.

The cutting of the text has been skillfully done in most cases, and the continuity is smooth. An exception must be made, however, to the omission of the ram in the Abraham and Isaac story; without this one verse the point of the whole episode is lost.

In this age of audio-visual aids to education these two discs would be highly suitable for children in particular as a means of becoming familiar with the Old Testament. The entire production has been recorded with uncommon skill and should give much delight to both young and old. Very highly recommended.—I.K.

The Mass, with and without commentary

▲ IN his excellent historical introduction to the Columbia record, Monsignor Dougherty explains that "...the Roman Mass as we witness it today appears as an expression of an ancient and alien culture. . . It needs a commentary." Both of

these above records are designed to fill this need: the Columbia as a straightforward presentation directed toward Roman Catholics and non-Romans alike; the Carmelite, an exegetical exercise for the benefit of the regular Faithful.

The approach of the two recordings to their common problem is diametrically opposite. The Columbia record offers the complete high service for the Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost using the common *Orbis factor* (for Sundays throughout the year, L.U. XI, p. 46). The explanation is

The Mass: Sung in Gregorian Mode; Canon Sydney MacEwan and the Choir of the Church of Santa Susanna, Rome. Columbia KL-5311, \$5.98.

This is the Mass: Carmelite Fathers Guild JBOP-2673, \$4.95.

restricted to a spectacular and informative accompanying booklet (for which the manufacturer has neglected to provide a storage sleeve) containing a resounding preface by Archbishop Sheen, an historical résumé by Monsignor Dougherty, and a comment on the "Universal Sacrifice" by Edward Jamieson, as well as the complete text of the Roman Mass in Latin with English translation illustrated by explanatory rubrics and photographs. The rendition of the chant by the Choir of Santa Susanna sounds remarkably indigenous to American ears; it is surprising to hear an Italian group singing in such a forthright, unsentimental style. Canon Sydney MacEwan delivers his part in an equally sincere and accomplished manner, and, as a whole, this record of the Eucharistic prayer and music of the traditional Roman rite should be both delightful and informative to specialists and inquirers alike.

The Carmelite record, on the other hand, consists entirely of commentary, very tastefully written, which is read by a

professional (unnamed) announcer while an actual Christmas Day celebration serves as background to the explanation. For persons completely familiar with the low mass of the Roman rite, the mass attended by the majority of parishioners every Sunday and Feast Day, this record will offer some interesting insights. To non-Romans it will reveal only tantalizing bits and pieces of a mysterious ceremony. The gap that this presentation has been designed to stop is the tremendous one, lamented by Monsignor Dougherty in the Columbia booklet, between the devout Roman Catholic parishioner and the supreme rite of the Church, the Eucharist, a gap caused by disparity in language and, as a consequence, lack of congregational participation. Many parishes are doing a great deal to minimize this distance, and the Carmelite Fathers are to be commended for a fine effort toward the goal.

—J. Robison

J. Robison is a young poet and critic who is particularly interested in religions.

From Verve, three comics

By DONALD PHELPS

THESE three recordings offer us the latest muscle show of a supposedly moribund art: radio comedy, as represented by Stoopnagle and Bud, Bob and Ray, Tizzy Lish, and the Club Matinee Gang. Like these artists, Winters, Berman and Sahl exploit the sort of dead-air intimacy peculiar to personnel interviewers, parlor magicians, and other professionals who make their personalities tantalizingly half-accessible to their public. It is hardly surprising that these recordings should have been taken from the actual night-club performances, with no appreciable loss to the record audiences; or that a sprawling night-club crowd should seem as enclosed and special as the participants in a parlor game (which,

of course, they are) or the handful of chortling technicians heard off-mike on the Bob and Ray morning radio show. This sort of intimacy lends comic weight to the skimpiest inflections, hesitations and vocal tics: Winters' frenetic vocal distractions; Sahl's queasy giggles; Berman's simperings and fidgets, make of the human voice a sort of prop, as sneaky and versatile as Will Rogers' lariat or W. C. Fields' billiard cue.

The foremost gadgeteer is probably Jonathan Winters, with whom I was glad to refresh my acquaintance. Some months ago I had the misfortune of watching Mr. Winters on television, sloshing around with some other talented performers in a trencherful of Schmaltz called "The Night of Christmas"; where I found that incorruptible old scrounge, Grandma Hopps, compromising herself appallingly with the

As a novelist, Mr. Phelps is of course interested in what is funny and what is not.

The Wonderful World of Jonathan Winters. Verve Records, Celebrity Series; MG-15009, \$4.98.

Outside Shelley Berman. Verve Records, Celebrity Series; MG-15007, \$4.98.

Mort Sahl: A Way of Life. Verve Records, Celebrity Series. MG-15006, \$4.98.

Spirit of Christmas Present. It was awful beyond my timid ability to describe, and I really hope Grandma will consult me next time; but the whole affair demonstrated the perils awaiting an (in every sense) eccentric talent like Mr. Winters. His is possibly the most literally self-destructive comedy in America today. His whole redoubtable vocal arsenal is employed for diversionary tactics, making the audience forget what has just happened, and disarming them for what is to come. To this end, Mr. Winters uses vocal switch-overs (gurgly Baby Lizbeth into splintery Ma Leatherstocking); throw-away gags (of Robin Hood's Merry Quaffers: "The poor always juice, you know!") uncanny mimicry of almost anything mechanical (the full range of sound effects on this record); and many things human (the most accurate, indeed, the only imitation of Edgar Buchanan I have ever heard). Even without the gimmicks, however, Winters' voice (like his face, naive, matter-of-fact and dryly insidious) suggests the same giddy resourcefulness with which Harold Lloyd and Buster Keaton romanced the Machine Age; and the personality it suggests, as brisk and vulnerable as Floyd's, counterpoints his more devilish routines in a very effective way. Still, playing this game of crack-the-whip doesn't exempt you from needing a good sense of direction, which Mr. Winters still has to acquire. His funniest things on this recording, for me, were the movie parodies of Westerns (Pioneers matriarch: "Put down that woodchuck, Lizbeth, ye don't know where it's been!") and Robin Hood films ("Maid Marian hangs around the camp—funny situation there!"). Here he has a ready-made narrative form which is unrestricted, and offers him plenty of oppor-

tunity to ping off low-flying insights. However, when he tries to exploit a situation (the filling-station routine or the Marine Corps bit) his inventiveness goes nervous and meager, and the whole routine lapses into unusable pancake batter (save for some intermittent laughs, like the guitar-twanging Marine hillbilly, courtesy of the film, "A Walk in the Sun".) But getting back to the crack-the-whip metaphor: a lot of former players have either dropped off and stayed off (where is the Club Matinee Gang now?) or settled down to just an occasional spin (Ernie Kovacs is mostly doing acting jobs for other producers). Mr. Winters has recklessness and dexterity, and I hope he acquires the sense of direction to help him keep whirling for some time.

Shelly Berman is more of a "straight" comic than either Winters or Sahl, meaning only that he depends on an Eiffel Tower structuring of gags and timing, and that most of his architectural sense is dedicated to enshrining the audience in the manner of older comedians. As I've said, all three play a sort of parlor game with the audience, engaging its confidence and, at the same time, keeping it at a cagey distance; Berman, to my knowledge, is the only one of the trio who includes in his repertoire an *actual* audience game (called "P.T.A.", and rescued mostly by Mr. Berman's good intentions). I mention this only because Mr. Berman's notion of what his audience expects often differs rather jarringly, for me, from what he is exceptionally well equipped to give them; and his meticulous talent has not yet saved him from (but in a way has made him subservient to) other people's ideas about comedy. The beginning of this record, I think, shows Mr. Berman's worst side: in a strident, edgy, fake-differential delivery, which alternates Jack Paar's juice-harp wheedle with Georgie Jessel's ceremonial bleat, he enters a few courtesy gags about his "very famous colleagues", Sahl and Bruce; then proceeds with a snide, sucking-up-to-the-middlebrows routine enlisting Kafka as straight man and leading into the first monologue. Only then—and with the two monologues following, but most es-

pecially the last—does Mr. Berman remind me of the quiet, insightful and tactful comedy which I admired on the Chevy Show and the Ed Sullivan Show. The first bit—a Saul Steinbergian filigree of Cohen on the Telephone—shows Mr. Berman's gift for a peculiarly detached kind of literary perception, by which he can sense both how his character feels and how he seems to Mr. Berman's withdrawn intelligence. By an extensive vocabulary of giggles and bridlings (for which thanks to Jack Benny seem partly in order; Mr. Berman's talents include one for eclecticism, which I think he over-indulges) he communicates the awkwardness and self-laceration which a certain type of telephone supplicant can experience for even a two-minute call.

The second monologue—a press agent buttering up various celebrities—is occasionally funny but suffers from Mr. Berman's tendency to over-decorate his better gags at the expense of the whole routine, creating shapeless repetition. The third, though (a Jewish small tradesman—actually, Mr. Berman tells us, his father—arguing with his son, the “ector”, against going to dramatic school) is Mr. Berman at ease and at his best. Here, too, some of the best stuff seems to have been imposed from outside, by Mr. Berman's tricky intelligence, rather than evoked from anything inside the situation; and he takes a rather obvious satisfaction in his observations which recalls some of Philip Roth's self-satisfied point-scoring in “Good-bye, Columbus”. Still, it is a pleasure to hear Mr. Berman's alert sensibility rehabilitate a usually mishandled comic type, like the Jewish storekeeper, or the fidgety pansy in the opening routine; and still more gratifying is his avoidance of the besetting peril of “cute Yiddishism”; the double-edged vulgarity of “look-at-my-superior-knowledge”, and “it's-awfully-vulgar-but-isn't-it-human?” How well he succeeds in the future depends, I'd guess, on his ability to keep his own talent in central view, and in constant motion.

It is hard to say anything very elaborate about Mort Sahl's new record, since a good part of the first side involves esoteric cross-references concerning

“Dean”, “Sammy”, “Frank”, and the Sands Hotel; the disentanglement of a lengthy shaggy-girl joke, for which Mort seemed to have lost the ending about two-thirds of the way through; and a lengthy account of Attorney Ehrlich's run-in with a sorority house-mother, which was funny in the pay-off, but reduced Mort to the unaccustomed role of raconteur. Intelligent comment on any of these would require of me a prolonged stay in Las Vegas, and a lucrative and/or confidential position in show business, both of which requirements I lack the sand for; while a sprinkling of isolated hits refer to an earlier Mort Sahl, who has already received intensive and intelligent comment from, among others, Manny Farber in *The New Leader*. The better moments on this record include his talk about encounters with recent medications (“You can decide the destiny of the world and other pressing problems, like which is the left side”); some of the topical stuff on the second side (his endorsement of the Yalta Papers: “They come in loose-leaf binders—you can get each new betrayal as it comes out”); and occasional flashes of that energetic candor which gives tang to salt-free statements (“*The Enquirer* is redundant”). But for too much of this record Mort Sahl sounds jaded, flustered and crowd-pleasing; mentions of Luce, Nixon and Yalta (each of which is saluted by the glad shriek of a lady, or cockatoo, in the audience) resemble nervous semaphores; while even the better ad libs are more loosely braided than many of those in his intellectual scarf-dances of the last two years. The biggest danger in testing himself against this kind of sloppy-minded and agreeable night-club mob is to his detachment, which is basic to the outrageousness and aptness of his comedy. Not the liberal attitudes, which are too easy to adapt or fake, but the absurdity-sniffing perception which enabled him to make those attitudes his own. I suspect this sort of detachment to be even more perishable than a genuine liberal conscience; since it is succeeded by a kind of eroded lassitude which is so like itself, but unyielding of either self-extension or self-discipline.

SOUND IDEAS

An Equipment Review

By LARRY ZIDE

BEFORE the actual reviews, I want to answer numerous queries from new readers by re-stating the basic premise of this column. We are not interested in the laboratory performance of equipment, because whatever is selected for review is not meant to be used in a laboratory. All equipment reviewed here has been set up as a component part of my home system and thus subjected to listening tests under conditions that are likely to be encountered

by the consumer. Steady readers know that I often employ various test devices, but only to verify and illustrate those conditions I have observed by ear. This is especially true in the case of transducers, where there are no absolute and accurate measurement systems such as are available for entirely electronic gear like amplifiers and preamps. In sum, what these reviews represent are *my opinion*, based on listening in my own living room.

Concertone 505 Stereo Recorder-Player

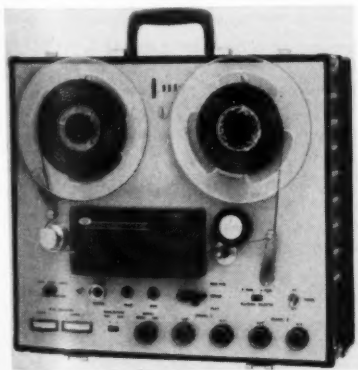
THE NEW Concertone 505 provides, in one portable case, performance approaching the finest professional equipment and at a lower price, although by no means can the 505 be called inexpensive.

The 505 is an extremely versatile recorder. It will record (and erase) full track, half track (either channel), and two-track stereo. It will play back all of these as well as four-track stereo tapes. The machine comes ready to play 7½-inch tapes. A simple pressure roller change and capstan sleeve removal provides the

3¾-inch speed. For stereo playback the front panel is equipped with a switch for selecting either the two-track or four-track playback heads. This use of separate heads for the two systems is to be preferred to a single-head shifting arrangement.

All controls are push-button activated and operated through brake and capstan solenoids. Controls are positive and instant acting. A particular advantage of brake solenoids is that in the event of tape breakage, or power loss, the brakes are instantly applied.

Tape motion is provided by three motors, including a synchronous-drive motor. Hold-back tension is electrical, and ad-



CONCERTONE 505
STEREO TAPE RECORDER

MANUFACTURER'S SPECIFICATIONS

Heads: Stacked erase, two-track record, two-track playback, four-track playback

Tape Speeds: 3.75 and 7.5 inches per second

Frequency Response: ± 2 db 50-15,000 cps @ 7½"
 ± 2 db 50-10,000 cps @ 3¾"

Flutter and Wow: Less than .2% RMS @ 7½"
Less than .25% RMS @ 3¾"

Signal to Noise: -50 db

Starting and Stopping Time: 0.5 second

Rewind time: 45 seconds for 1200 feet

Output: Low impedance, cathode follower

Inputs: Mike (high impedance)

Line (high impedance)

Power Requirements: 160 watts

Dimensions: 16¼" wide, 14½" high, 6¾" deep

Weight: 35 pounds

Price with Carrying Case: \$550.00

justable. Large flywheels are used for the belt-driven capstan and mechanical flutter filter. The resultant system flutter is very low and speed remains constant to the inner coils of tape. All controls are balanced to the point that there is no tendency to spill tape even when the stop button is activated on fast forward or rewind positions. Incidentally, rewind of a 1200-foot reel is accomplished in just over 30 seconds.

As a recorder the 505 performed admirably. Recorded sound was just barely distinguishable from the original at $7\frac{1}{2}$. Since the recorder has separate record and playback heads, it is possible to monitor the tape itself an instant after it has been recorded. The 505 is equipped with a source-tape control which allows the user to fade from the incoming signal to the tape signal. Each channel has its own line and microphone gain controls.

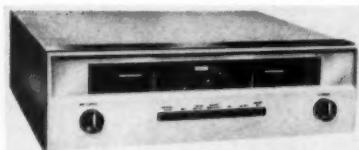
Record indication is by two volume indicating meters. These meters are the only part of the 505 that do not come up to the high over-all level of quality in evidence elsewhere. While they are superior to a neon bulb indicator, they are not much better than a good magic-eye system. The reason seems to be that

the meter movement itself is undamped. The result is a meter that jumps all over the place and is generally unsuited to critical volume indication. Unlike the illustration herewith, recent 505 models are being supplied with square meters. It is this new version that I tested.

For playback of recorded tapes the 505 is a hard machine to beat. At $7\frac{1}{2}$, equalization was within 2 db of the NARTB curve. My test tape only goes to 10 kc, but subjectively at least the Concertone is flat much further. Both two- and four-track tapes were reproduced with a smoothness, lack of distortion and preciseness of speed that will complement the very finest associated equipment. The few $3\frac{3}{4}$ tapes I played were surprisingly good on the 505. The freedom from flutter and wow, especially critical at this speed, is particularly gratifying.

As I mentioned earlier, the 505 is by no means an inexpensive machine. It does, however, deliver a great deal. It is an ideal choice for broadcast-quality work, where portability is important. It is also an ideal choice for the home that demands the finest in reproduction and durability. In fact, the 505 is a worthy addition to the best systems from all points of view.

Harmon-Kardon "Madrigal" II Stereo Tuner, Model ST-360A



UNTIL QUITE recently Harmon-Kardon has been, in my mind at least, primarily a purveyor of moderately priced high-fidelity components. Now along come two products that put the lie to this belief. Both are really excellent components, and the tuner at least can hold its head with the very best.

The "Madrigal" tuner is a unit of extreme versatility. The unit supplied me had a multiplex decoder already installed. Purchasers can, of course, have the unit

MANUFACTURER'S SPECIFICATIONS

FM
Sensitivity: 0.95 Microvolts for 20 db of quieting
1.9 Microvolts for 30 db of quieting
Selectivity: 240 Kc bandwidth: 6 db down
Frequency Response: ± 0.5 db 20-20,000 cps.
Distortion: less than 0.4% IM at 100% modulation
AM
Sensitivity: 20 microvolts per meter; terminal sensitivity 4 microvolts
Selectivity: 16 Kc bandwidth: 6 db down
Antenna: Built-in ferrite loopstick, with low-impedance terminal for external antenna.
Distortion: less than 0.8% harmonic
AM-FM Outputs: Low impedance
Dimensions: $15\frac{1}{4}$ " wide, $4\frac{3}{4}$ " high, $12\frac{3}{4}$ " deep
Weight: 26 lbs.
Price: \$199.95

without the multiplex adapter, and add this feature at any time in the future, as the adapter fits onto the chassis directly. Already part of the tuner is separate AM and FM tuning, with bar-type magic-eye indicators for each. Front-panel push buttons select AM, with or without a noise filter, FM, with or without AFC, stereo

AM-FM, and stereo multiplex. The end button is a power off switch.

The FM tuner section of the "Madrigal" is as clean a tuner as I have ever heard. It is also an extremely sensitive tuner, pulling in weak stations with excellent limiting. Since there is no stereo multiplexing in New York City at the present time, I was unable to do more than eavesdrop on several storecasting systems operating in the city. Because the quality of the signal these stations put out is rather limited it is impossible to evaluate a multiplex adapter beyond recognizing the fact that it works.

The AFC circuit is effective in preventing drift, even from a cold start. It does not add any audible character to reproduction.

The AM section, too, is at the top of its class. With good stations AM re-

production was very nearly indistinguishable from the FM counterpart. The tuner is an extremely quiet one with strong stations. For weaker stations, or when other interference is encountered, the switched noise-filter is employed. It is quite effective, although it does cut out much of the high-frequency response to music as well.

All in all, I can find no quarrel with the "Madrigal" tuner. It is a most excellent product, handsomely styled and logically laid out. At \$200 it is not over-priced.

**HARMON-KARDON MODEL MA-350
MULTI-PLEX ADAPTER
MANUFACTURER'S SPECIFICATIONS**
Output level: 1 volt, adjustable
Input level: 30 millivolts
Distortion: 1% total harmonic distortion maximum
Noise Level: -60 db.
Cross talk: -40 db.
Frequency Response: ± 1 db 30-15,000 cps.
Power Requirements: Supplied by ST-360A
Price: \$49.95

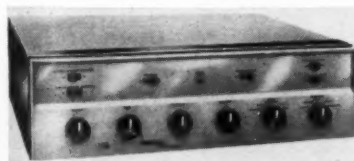
Harmon-Kardon "Chorale" Preamp-Amp Model A-260

THE "Chorale" preamplifier-amplifier is designed to complement the "Madrigal" tuner. As the illustrations show, it is styled in the same manner, and the two pieces, with their attractive gold anodized aluminum face plates, make a handsome addition to any decor.

Like the tuner the amplifier is a top-notch performer. It has many valuable and interesting features as well as plenty of power for most of the low-efficiency speakers. The amplifiers are rated at 30 watts per channel or 60 watts in combination.

I found sound from any source to be clean with solid bass and smooth, easy highs. The preamplifiers were quiet and sufficiently sensitive to handle, without noise, all but the lowest output cartridges. Equalization was accurate to well below 40

cycles on phono position, an excellent figure for any preamp. At twenty cycles my sample was 5 db down on both channels—a considerably better figure than any other speaker's performance. The ganged volume control tracked very well, requiring only a slight balance touch-up when extreme level changes were undertaken. An interesting feature of the "Chorale" is a front-panel switch that disables the tone controls, thus eliminating them from the circuit. According to H-K this eliminates phase shift distortion caused by tone controls. A side value is to insure flat response throughout, since many amplifiers, and this is no exception, have tone controls that are flat at other than the marked flat position. In listening tests, with program music I could detect no audible difference with



HARMON-KARDON "CHORALE" STEREO
PREAMPLIFIER-AMPLIFIER, MODEL A-260

MANUFACTURER'S SPECIFICATIONS

Power Output: 30 watts per channel
Power Distortion: 0.5% harmonic at 30 watts
Minimum Volume Hum: 95 db below 30 watts
Tone Control Range: ± 16 db at 50 and 10,000 cycles
Inputs: (dual) Magnetic phono (RIAA), Tape head (NARTB), Tuner, Aux 1, Aux 2
Outputs: (dual) Tape, two AC convenience, 4-, 8-, 16-ohm speaker, special provision for center speaker.
Dimensions: 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ " wide, 4 $\frac{7}{8}$ " high, 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ " deep
Weight: 35 lbs.
Price: \$199.95

the tone controls in or out. Laboratory measurement showed that the phase shift of the over-all amp was indeed reduced by the switch.

Among the many other features incorporated, some of the more interesting ones are: speaker impedance selecting switches on the rear, separate tone controls for each channel ganged by means of a friction clutch, a speaker phasing switch, separate rumble and scratch filters, a front panel switch for a mid (or third) channel speaker, and a switch to select either one of two stereo speaker systems.

In sum, the "Chorale" is a fine example of the integrated stereo preamp-amplifier. The sound it produces and also the conveniences it features make for an excellent value. At this point, perhaps it might be best to clarify one fact. There are better power amplifiers and better preamps of course. But the very best

preamp, which has lower noise and distortion with even better equalization and power response than the "Chorale", costs as much or more than the "Chorale" for just a preamp. In power amplifiers, too, more power, even lower distortion, and better high-power frequency response are available at prices approaching and exceeding the cost of the complete "Chorale". But what I want to emphasize at this point is that in A-B comparisons the superior unit, most of which would cost at least twice as much as the H-K unit, would sound only *slightly* superior. My point is, then, that for a very small gain on amplifiers such as the "Chorale" one must lay out much more. In its own general category—that is, among combined preamplifier-amplifiers selling in the neighborhood of two hundred dollars—the Harmon-Kardon "Chorale" is one of the very best.

A note on the 'compatible' stereodisc

ON FEBRUARY 25TH of this year the Audio Engineering Society held a technical meeting at which a supposed *compatible* stereophonic disc was demonstrated and discussed.

For the technically minded, the new system is identical to the regular Westrex disc except that the vertical channel has the extreme bass rolled off slightly. This diminution of vertical signal is alleged to allow the playing of the disc with mono cartridges (which have poor vertical response).

My reactions to the system are predicated on this demonstration, and a sample disc which the promoters of the new system distributed.

When the Westrex system was first inaugurated I felt it to be, in terms of reproduced sound, a major step *backwards*. Of late, stereodiscs have been approaching but, I feel, not yet equaling, the best mono products in cleanliness (lack of distortion) and wide-frequency response. In the quest for truer, more natural sound (which I always thought was the goal of high fidelity) this new system is

a *further* step backwards—and a long step.

At the demonstration, we heard a selection played from regular stereo grooves, from the new system, and from monophonic (but cut with a stereo cutter). All three bands were A-B compared against the tape from which they had been cut. The only positive conclusion I could come to was that the tape, in *all* cases, was clearly superior to the disc. Later, at home, the sample disc more or less confirmed these impressions (without, of course, benefit of further comparison with the tape).

In an eloquent plea, the late Metropolitan Opera baritone Leonard Warren, who was present as an observer, begged for better sound instead of new common denominators. This column can only echo that plea. If compatibility is to be among the benefits of tomorrow's stereodiscs, so much the better. But it seems to me that the prime objective must be *better sound*, and other considerations should be incidental. This proposed system (which can be heard at the present time on Design Records) falls far short of this ideal.

— (Continued from page 603)

two sentences to a dismissal of our entire system, particularly when the next five or more paragraphs were devoted to just one German school. I am surprised that he could spend so much time extolling a single European academy and then admit that his only information on American instruction was what someone had told him—not really a valid comparison.

Before leaving this topic until such time as a more thorough examination can be made, I should add my opinion that even though music courses may not be prescribed for a degree candidate in engineering, the student intending to seek employment in recording should minor in music where possible or, failing that, take his electives in the school of music.

I do not agree with Dr. Kuttner's observation that a qualified engineer would find it beneath his dignity to associate with microphones and tape recorders. If a parallel were to be drawn in the performing arts, we might find all our qualified musicians turning to musicology, being too dignified to touch an instrument or a baton. Such a condition would be more akin to snobbery than to an overabundance of talent.

In conclusion, let me reiterate my agreement that a background in music is an absolute necessity for a man entrusted with the preservation of a musical performance. However, it seems to me that our American engineers deserve more credit than Dr. Kuttner allows them. The story of Johann Sebastian Bach's pilgrimage to Lübeck to hear Buxtehude is well known to music lovers. Thanks largely to American engineering, Dr. Kuttner need journey no farther than his home phonograph to enjoy the same music. What was a once-in-a-lifetime occasion can now be an everyday experience. And, with the advent of stereophonic recording, masterworks such as the antiphonal choirs of the Gabrieli, to name one example, can now be enjoyed by people who perhaps have never seen the inside of a concert hall. I can't help wondering where all this wonderful music, and the musicians who play it, would be if it were not for the efforts of our maligned engineers.

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Folk Music

By HENRIETTA YURCHENCO

Bulgaria: Collected and edited by A. L. Lloyd; compiled and edited by Alan Lomax. Columbia World Library of Folk and Primitive Music KL-5378, Vol. XVII, \$5.98.

▲IS a "genuine" folk-singer one with a cracked voice who sings off pitch, and mouths the words unintelligibly? Some devotees of folk music hold that by this mark you shall know them. They reason that folk music is simple music to be sung by anyone, the less polish the better. While this may be true of some folk songs, many demand artistry and vocal agility. The non-professional folk-singer, like an art singer, must perfect his technique even as he probes emotional meaning. In their native element singers with talent are distinguished even in this realm from those who have none. Is it the collector, the folk music enthusiast, who lacks criteria, and who has spread the easy myth that musical standards have no place in this music?

Columbia's latest record of Bulgarian music is a fine example of a folk culture with pride in its high artistic standards. Only where a vigorous and lively tradition exists, of course, are such criteria possible, and Bulgaria fits this description neatly. Bulgarians sing with passion and finesse. What is more, their music is studded with brilliant melodies, exciting erratic rhythms, and polyphony that startles the unprepared listener.

Bulgarian music is the child of an ancient wedlock between the cultures of Europe and Asia. The ancient Bulgars who came from the Far East in the seventh century gradually mixed with the Slavs they encountered. Today's Bulgarian musical program was devised long ago during that long occupation of the country by the Turks, who ruled from the 14th century to the 19th. Because the people were left with no intellectual or aristocratic leadership during their long subjugation they were thrown on their own resources to create a culture and a life. And rich was the culture they created. The fact that it has been so well preserved is due, no doubt, to their isolation. The richness of the musical material, on the other hand, grew out of

the high quality of the musical cultures that intermingled here and something else more wondrous—the innate musical sense of the Bulgarians themselves.

Bulgarian tunes are generally of narrow range. There are even songs on a single note though not on this recording. Most of them are built on the Aeolian scale (the La scale) but there are many examples of pentatonic and Western scales, Eastern church modes, and the *magam* system of the Arabic world, and this disc is the more valuable for offering a fair sampling of most of them. Generally vocal music is sung in unison or antiphonally. In the southwestern part of the country there is an unusual kind of polyphony, perhaps one of Europe's oldest forms of group singing. One singer sings the melody while the other voices act as a drone. This frequently produces sharp dissonances which the peasants of that area say gives the song its bit—"rings like a bell".

Bulgarian rhythms come from the Turks. The irregular (*aksak*) rhythms—7/8, 11/16, 13/16—are obtained by combining notes two-thirds or one and a half times as long as each other, rather than one half or twice as long as in our own culture. These are distinctive rhythms that instantly identify the region. They defy imitation by the western performer.

As this recording illustrates, most of the singing is done by women, even the long epic ballads traditionally performed by men in other nearby countries. The singing style combines Western and Eastern characteristics—glottal stops, diverse ornamentation. The men do most of the instrumental playing. Apparently there is a feeling that girls who play instruments are not the kind to marry. The album has a good many examples of excellent instrumental playing on traditional bagpipes, flutes, and strings.

Bulgarians keep their songs neatly tabulated. A song is performed either in the fields, for a working bee, at a wedding, for dancing the *horo* or *rachenitsa*, or for festive meals when the long ballads are spun out. Old songs mingle with new. Music of the past is faithfully preserved but not in the form of museum fossils. Folk music constantly revitalizes itself in new songs based on traditional forms. Particularly charming is the way one singer explains how she made up her song (Side II, Song 31): "I know about five hundred songs. I took a bit from one, a

Henrietta Yurchenco is the chief folk music critic. Paul Kresh and Herbert Hausrecht are her associate reviewers.

bit from another, and so I made a new melody." Too bad our composers aren't that candid.

A. L. Lloyd deserves special plaudits for collecting the music in this album, for the judicious editing, and for the exemplary notes, which include information on history, musical characteristics and local customs. —H.Y.

Rumanian Folk Songs and Dances;

Orchestra Lautaru Barbu. Artia 105,

Vol. 1, \$4.98. Artia 106, Vol. 2, \$4.98.

▲HERE a big concert orchestra performs popular folk music. *Lautaru* is the name given to the Rumanian instrumental ensembles that perform at village weddings, holidays and other festive occasions, and this one you would scarcely stumble on at a village Central Committee gathering. Most of the members are regular deskmen of the Georges Enesco State Philharmonic Orchestra of Bucharest. However, one finds here strings, clarinet, and trumpet along with such native contributions as the *kobsa*, a lute-like instrument. And there are pan-pipes, providing those amazing glissandos, cimbalom, and the primitive flutes everywhere abundant in this folk music.

Virtuosity is on a high level. Nicu Stanescu, conductor and violinist, turns in some astounding imitations of bag-pipes, (misnamed "The Whistle" in the notes) and birdcalls following a gypsy tradition cherished by Rumanian folk musicians. *Horas* and *Sarbas*, with their jagged ecstatic rhythms, provide bright interludes. The *doina*, a form in free improvisational style with its roots in Eastern music, usually a vocal form, is heard here in instrumental clothes. There's an excellent one in the first volume. —H.Y.

Rumanian Folk Songs and Dances.

Monitor MF-304, \$4.98.

▲ANOTHER excellent release of Rumanian folk music. Like the Artia LPs it features a professional ensemble, called The Lark, and a number of trained art singers. As an added bonus Rumania's finest folk singer, Maria Lataretu, performs a few selections in inimitable style.

The Lark Ensemble is smaller than the *Lautaru Barbu* on Artia and doesn't overwhelm the listener with gargantuan sound from the string section. It is well-scaled, more intimate, better for the purposes of folk music. But it is just as professional as the other. The singers do a fine job of adapting their trained voices to suit the nature of folk songs, particularly Vesa Bujor in his version of the *Doina* from Olt. He retains the free non-metrical singing technique of the traditional performer. Apart from the sensational instrumental virtuosity demonstrated on

this record, the honors must go to Lataretu, a professional folk singer from Balcesti. She is not a trained singer, but a folk singer of excellent resources. Her technique has all the essential qualities of her people—the characteristic quaver, the sharp attention to ornamentation—and above all, a sensual and tenderly passionate voice. She has refined the native manner, but has not vulgarized it.

Some of the material on this record appears on other releases—inevitable when new territory is opened up. All the record companies want to present the most popular, the music least strenuous to unaccustomed ears played by the finest orchestras and soloists. Contrary to expectations this does not always yield the best results. The three LPs reviewed here all have the same sound whether played by large or small ensembles. The arrangements display only minor differences, and only one type of Rumanian folk music—that played by the popular rural band in its most urban trappings—is to be heard. The enterprising record company will find a wealth of material extremely well recorded in the archives of the Folklore Institute of Bucharest.

No notes, only short resumes of the lyrics. —H.Y.

On the Road; Sonny Terry, J. C. Burris, Sticks McGhee. Folkways FA-2369, \$5.95.

▲THE inimitable "Sonny" joined by his colleagues, Burris on harmonica, bones and slapping, with "Sticks" McGhee on guitar, take turns at singing and solo playing as well as ensemble. They offer a varied and exciting record. The songs include slow blues like *Poor Man But a Good Man* and *Blues All Around my Bed* and fast rhythm numbers such as *You Keep on Doggin' Me*. The instrumental selections are imaginative improvisations. Noteworthy among them is *Pete's Jump* (dedicated to Pete Seeger) with its slow rhapsodic introduction and then its fast, short, repeated, bouncy and syncopated phrases. The more familiar *Easy Rider* blues is here with a rockin' chair guitar accompaniment. *Drink of Wine, Mop*, *Mop* is closest to straight pop song and is the least interesting of the collection. In a new departure for Folkways, the record is packaged with a booklet which contains the music as well as the text. This is a tremendous step toward the fuller documentation of the great body of folk music. There appear to be a few inaccuracies in the texts, and the music can only be a guide because of the free style of these folksongs; nevertheless, the booklet can be of practical use in the study and teaching of the music. —H.H.

Stereotape Reviews

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 6 ("Pastoral"); Symphony No. 7 in A*; Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra of London conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. Four Track 7½ ips. Stereo Tape, Vanguard VTP-1606, \$11.95.

THE "Pastoral" is superbly done, but not the Seventh. As A. K. points out in his April, 1958, review of the same performances, Boult's general approach to Beethoven is one of gentle warmth and breadth—far more appropriate in the Sixth than in the Seventh Symphony. The latter is just too mild and easy-going. Vanguard's sound is grandly musical throughout: well balanced, clean, and spacious. —P.C.P.

GROFÉ: *Grand Canyon Suite*; Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Oivind Fjeldstad. Four Track 7½ ips. Stereo Tape, Tandberg SMS S-21, \$7.95.

ALTHOUGH sober-minded and a little less lush in orchestral timbre and blend than it might be, this version of the *Grand Canyon Suite* is by no means unsatisfactory. Much of the humor of *On the Trail* is lost because of too-fast tempi, perhaps, but the remaining sections are generally well played and well paced. The sound, although on the dry side, is clean and fairly well separated. —P.C.P.

SAINT-SAËNS: *Symphony No. 3 in C minor, Op. 78*; Marcel Dupré (organ); Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Paray. Four Track 7½ ips. Stereo Tape, Mercury STC-90012, \$7.95.

PARAY treats this Symphony with too much finesse and too little ardor, I believe. The results are to my taste rather stilted and stodgy. Dupré's contribution is excellent throughout, his registration well-chosen and effective. Mercury's sound is clean and probing, searching out every detail, thrilling in the tutti climaxes. Crosstalk became annoying at times, especially in the *Adagio* section of the first move-

ment. See also page 135 in the October, 1958, ARG. —P.C.P.

Bouquet de Paray—Rossini: *"William Tell" Overture*; **WEBER:** *Invitation to the Dance*; **SAINT-SAËNS:** *Danse macabre*; **LISZT:** *Mephisto Waltz*; Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Paray. Mercury Stereo SR-90203, \$6.95.

STANDARD pops-concert fare, performed in a briskly exemplary manner. Clear and spacious sound. —P.C.P.

RODGERS: *The Sound of Music*; The Pete King Chorale. Four Track 7½ ips. Stereo Tape, Kapp KT-41021, \$7.95.

THIS potpourri from the latest Rodgers and Hammerstein collaboration is pleasant enough listening, but it seems to me that it is performed in a quite lifeless, disinterested manner. The recording is done quite close-in with an obviously artificial echo added. In sum, Hollywoodish. The sound is indeed excellent, with sharply directional stereo, but crosstalk is noticeable at every break between pieces. —P.C.P.

Furioso: Sabicas and Dolores Vargas. Four Track 7½ ips. Stereo Tape, Decca ST 7-8900, \$7.95.

THE goings-on here are in the usual boisterous manner of flamenco. The contents include *La Rabida*, *Danza de las Marianas*, *Arabesca*, *Los Arraxanes*, and *Desengano*. No matter what one might feel towards this sort of music, there's no denying that it makes superb show-off material for a hi-fi system, especially when it is as spectacularly recorded as this is. The only problem in the sound is occasional crosstalk. —P.C.P.

Russian Fair; Don Cossack Choir conducted by Serge Jaroff. Four Track 7½ ips. Stereo Tape, Decca ST7-10016, \$7.95.

THESE Don Cossacks have vocal dexterity to burn; the sounds they produce

are, at times, quite amazing. The music is of Russian folk origin (*The Birch Tree, After the Battle, A Gypsy Campfire, A New Year's Tale*, etc.), and the singing is, in the main, rough and exuberant. In short, peasant-like, but appropriate. One channel of Side A had an intermittent drop-out sort of effect throughout the side; close inspection of the tape showed a small scratch in the oxide every few inches along the tape. Except for this defect and some annoying crosstalk, the stereo sound is glorious. —P.C.P.

•
Have Organ, Will Travel; George Wright (organ). Four Track 7½ ips. Stereo Tape, HiFi Tape R-721, \$7.95.

•
TWRIGHT's playing has a kind of tired flamboyance. Adroit handling of this Wurlitzer monster (in the Fox Theater, San Francisco) is certainly in evidence, but there is little of the madcap virtuosity usually found in such recitals as this. The various pieces—*Granada, Istanbul, April in Paris*, etc.—have geographical connotations, thus the album title. The stereo sound is really awesome; the tape hiss level moderate. Crosstalk is faintly heard in spots. —P.C.P.

•
Danceable! Mel Connor and his orchestra. Four Track 7½ ips. Stereo Tape, Livingston 4T-6, \$7.95.

•
THE arrangements here are simple and uncluttered, the beat solid and persistent, the playing relaxed. "Danceable!" is just that. Included are *Some Enchanted Evening, Balai Hai, Dancing in the Dark, Johnny One Note, The Continental*, and *Gigi*. Livingston's sound is close-in and rather dead, but quite clean. —P.C.P.

•
Here Come The Coachmen; Four Track 7½ ips. Stereo Tape, HiFi Tape R-412, \$7.95.

•
HILL-BILLY devotees will surely have fun with this. The performances are polished, if just a bit zany in their good spirits. The Coachmen, a group of three young men who accompany themselves with two guitars and a double bass, sing among other things *John Hardy, Sally Don't You Grieve, Goin' Down the*



Road, Boll Weevil, and Everybody Loves Saturday Night. The engineering is super close-in and very spectacular, though crosstalk was noticeable. —P.C.P.

•
Target for Tonite; The Starlight Music Orchestra. Four Track 7½ ips. Stereo Tape, Livingston 4T-7, \$7.95.

•
THE sound is full and spacious, the music relaxed and syrupy (rather lush arrangements of *Moon Over Miami, When You Wish Upon A Star, Moonlight Becomes You, Stairway to the stars, Stardust*, and *Count Every Star*, among others). As a whole, relaxing and soothing background music. —P.C.P.

•
Twenty-Two Best Loved Christmas Piano Concertos; George Greeley (piano); Warner Brothers Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ted Dale. Four-Track 7½ ips. Stereo Tape, Warner Bros. WST-1338, \$7.95.

•
TOUT of season, but just received. The weak of heart are advised to steer clear, for the arrangements here (of familiar Christmas carols, hymns, and tunes such as *Joy to the World, O Little Town of Bethlehem, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, Carol of the Drum, White Christmas, Silent Night*, and *O Holy Night*) are pure corn and more often than not in terrible taste. Qualms aside, though, this is a sonic extravaganza of the first order. The sound is simply huge—one of these paradoxical close-in, yet reverberant mikings—and the stereo depth and spread are superb. It's a shame that a little more musical restraint and intelligence couldn't have been applied in arranging what could have been pleasantly diverting fare for holiday parties. —P.C.P.

Historic Reissues

The Immortal Harry Lauder: *A wee Deoch an' Doris; Breakfast in bed on Sunday morning; Soosie MacLean; Oh how I weary, dearie, for you; There is somebody waiting for me; The Wee Hoose 'mang the Heather; I've just got off the chain; Scotch Memories Medley (Hame o' mine; A Scot is a Scot; My bonnie Wee Wee); The End of the Road; Sir Harry Lauder (comedian) with orchestra.* RCA Camden CAL-479, \$1.98.

▲IN the days of acoustic recording Harry Lauder had a long list of best sellers; no American home with a parlor Victrola was complete without a number of them. He was, of course, a top-bracket entertainer, whether in vaudeville or traveling with his own concert company. According to Ramsay Stuart, whose annotations accompany this record, he held something of a record for "farewell tours." I must have heard him on one of the last of these, and I always remember him as one of the most naturally funny men I ever saw. He had only to come on the stage and stand still and the audience would go into hysterics. I saw him later in a movie and could not help being struck by the same audience reaction. Stuart tells of Lauder's resolve when he first appeared in England not to sing in a dialect no one could understand, but to adopt a Scotch-English. As everyone knows Harry Lauder became the typical Scot to the peoples of England and America. The recordings here presented belong to his later years, for they are all electrically recorded. The voice, never more than a vehicle for his warm humor and sentiment, was worn and frayed, yet it was still expressive. Some of us who grew up with older versions of the songs may miss a point here and there (such as the magnificently rolled r's in *Breakfast in bed*) but there are new details to offset the loss. One wonders how these sketches will strike the generations who never knew the man. Lauder, like Gracie Fields, could lay on thick sentiment as well as humor; the program contains examples of both. I suspect such old favorites as

A Wee Deoch and Doris and *Breakfast in bed on Sunday morning* (where is *Roamin' in the gloamin'?*) will still make the strongest appeal. —P.L.M.

•
The Art of Kirsten Flagstad: *Ah perfido! (Beethoven); "Oberon"—Ozeand u Ungeheuer (Weber); "Fidelio"—Abscheulicher! wo eilst du hin? (Beethoven); "Die Walküre"—Du bist der Lenz; Ho-jo-to-ho!; "Lohengrin"—Elsas Traum; Euch Luft, die mein Klagen; "Tannhäuser"—Dich, teure Halle; Elisabeths Gebet; Kirsten Flagstad (soprano), respectively with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy and an orchestra conducted by Hans Lange. RCA Camden CAL-462, \$1.98.*

▲FLAGSTAD made her historic Metropolitan debut in February, 1935, and was kept very busy for the rest of that season. Her first recording session with Victor was after her return from Europe in the fall, before the reopening of the opera. It is characteristic of the Norwegian soprano that two sessions (October 9, 1935, and October 17, 1937) sufficed to produce this program of large-scale music. For her first recordings she had the assistance of a studio orchestra conducted by Hans Lange; two years later she sang with the Philadelphia Orchestra and benefited hugely by the presence of Ormandy on the podium. The 1935 performances are hampered by the dead acoustics of the studio in which they were made; the 1937 "takes" show the voice in much better perspective, finely supported by the incomparable orchestra. Beethoven's concert *scena* (a kind of study for the great "Fidelio" aria) has not fared very well on recent recordings. Flagstad's voice is magnificent in it, and she sings in the grand manner. The "Oberon" and "Fidelio" arias also are excellent. Oddly, though Flagstad was first and foremost a Wagnerian, the reverse of the disc is less satisfying. This is not altogether a matter of acoustics: three of the arias belong to the Philadelphia group. But Elisabeth, Elsa, and Sieglinde were less Flagstad's meat than Isolde and the Brünnhildes. The singing here is as always admirable, but a little too majestic. —P.L.M.

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Unlikely Corners

WHY NOT LOOK below the surface occasionally and find out what it is in the direct appeal of the popular tune which makes the audience go home whistling; to see if there is not some artistic impulse hidden in unlikely corners. . .

—Ralph Vaughan Williams

EVERY NOW and then It Is All Worth-While. You go for months, nay years, and then one day a record or two comes along and lo!—there are reasons for all those turntables, pickups, cartridges, woofers, tweeters, amplifiers, and all the other impedimenta it takes merely to hear a record. I look back, not without a little wistful longing, to the days when you put a record on a thing that went around, and, while a needle (it was not called a stylus, then) gouged the grooves, we managed to enjoy what came out of the talking machine. And all without today's prerequisite of a degree in electrical engineering (or its equivalent), not to mention today's preoccupation with the isolated "sound".

The point of this digressive preamble—it rather got away from me, for I am having trouble with my damn needle and the amplifier, so I'm down on high fidelity again—was to have been that every now and then a record comes along that sweetens the disposition, gladdens the heart, stimulates the intellect, and proves so impressive that the all too often unrewarding hours (literally) at the turntable turn suddenly to gold. Such a rare golden moment came when I heard, for the first time, the glorious voice of Anita Darian. Not that her first record, **East of The Sun** (Kapp © 3052), is pure gold; there may just be a touch too much of the gimmick about it, for the song selection is circumscribed by the idea of the album to deal in quasi-Oriental musical fare. There is really nothing wrong with the idea, and it is fancifully carried off, not only by the considerably gifted Miss Darian, but also by the colorful orchestrations of Frank Hunter and the excellent recording. Miss Darian's true bailiwick is Broadway (when the record was made she was singing in "Flower Drum Song"), and she sings a few songs from that locale, though these, too, are Easternized: *We Kiss in the Shadow*, *Baubles, Bangles, and Beads*,

Mountain High, Valley Low. Included also are some enchanting Armenian folk and popular songs.

Anita Darian is a soprano whose voice has a lovely, pure quality which enables her to project song lyrics with a crystalline clarity. Though eschewing histrionics, Miss Darian evidences a remarkable range and control along with the natural beauty of her voice. She sings with intelligence applied to both the music and lyrics; a rare ability, this.

Miss Darian is not, of course, just another pop singer, nor is she a fugitive from opera who would like to cross the track. She gracefully, and lyrically, makes herself at home in any musical quarter. I think that I first heard Miss Darian sing in Mark Bucci's wonderful trio of one-act operas, "Triad", and recall that at the time I hoped Mr. Bucci's works would be recorded, particularly by the vocalists who were demonstrating them. Incidentally, Miss Darian was scheduled to be the soloist in Mr. Bucci's "Koncerto for Kazoo" with the New York Philharmonic late in March. Now that Miss Darian has her "gimmick" album out of the way, it is to be hoped that Kapp Records will get her to do an album of fine show songs, or maybe an album of Marc Bucci's songs (or even the complete "Triad", a work which, if given a chance, could prove to be popular even though it is good. It contains some of the best vocal writing I've ever heard this side of Harold Arlen). But Anita Darian's voice is so good that I would settle for anything she might do.

Which reminds me, **The Music of Harold Arlen/The Music of Richard Rodgers** (Everest LPBR-5066) may be found in an album assembled and conducted by Poliakin, whose forces include 54 men in the orchestra and 20 voices in the choir. Mr. Poliakin treads warily in his selection of material, for here are all the usual numbers recorded dozens of times before. To wit—Rodgers:

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Anita Darian—Photo
by Avery Willard

Falling in Love with Love, I Could Write a Book, My Funny Valentine, If I Loved You, It Might as Well Be Spring, Something Wonderful; Arlen: *That Old Black Magic, Stormy Weather, I've Got the World on a String, Come Rain or Come Shine, Over the Rainbow, Happiness Is a Thing Called Joe*. The arrangements are tasteful, however, if not exciting. On the whole the album is pleasant listening, for it is obvious that Poliakin respects the material, familiar though it is.

Arlen's ill-fated *Saratoga* has had its music treated to two very interesting interpretations, one by Larry Elgart (RCA Victor LPM-2166) and the other by the Paul Smith Trio (Imperial 9095). The Elgart is designed mostly for dancing with the emphasis upon the beat, with up-to-date arrangements by John Murtaugh and Ernie Wilkins. I don't know what category Larry Elgart and his band fall into, but since the liner notes employ the term "concept" I suppose this disc belongs in some modern jazz niche. It sounds highly interesting to me, with extraordinary instrumental colorings, some songs even employing the voice of Carole Sloane—not actually singing, but vocalizing, as it were. The somewhat acrid harmonies give the songs a bittersweet quality, as, for example, in *Goose Never Be a Peacock*.

Pianist Paul Smith and trio, on the Imperial Record, give a more romantic interpretation of the "Saratoga" songs. Most of the time, in fact, the group even sticks to the original harmonies. Mr. Smith is a young pianist of great gifts, musically erudite, (hear his Mozart *cum* Bach version of *Dog Eats Dog*), sensitive (as in the poetically handled *Love Held Lightly*), or even a bit wrong (as in the Carmen Cavallero-ish *Game of Poker*). Here is an inventively arranged collection of songs with a treatment that approaches the composer's original intentions; and included, as also in the Larry Elgart album, are two songs cut in Philadelphia: *Parks of Paris* and *You for Me*.

Piquant instrumental effects, flawlessly recorded, are the features of **Sounds Different!** (Everest LPBR-5053), an album by Joe Venuto and his Quartet,

with vocals by Sandi Blaine. Mr. Venuto is a master of the marimba and the vibes, which I am not always prepared to admit into the family of instruments. (I have much the same attitude toward the accordion, harmonica and the novachord—not to mention *musique concrète*). But this is beside the point. What matters is what is done with the resources at hand and Mr. Venuto and group do a great deal, making a lot of highly listenable music along the way. Miss Blaine is a fine, straightforward singer and I, for one, would like to have heard more of her. Still this is a most diverting program, with my austere nod going to *Dancing on the Ceiling, That's All* (both sung; give me a pretty ballad and I'm yours), and the instrumental *Surrey with a Fringe on Top* and *Love Nest*.

Little Mary Sunshine (Capitol WAO-1240) is a big hit off Broadway and has received raves from some of our most astute aisle-sitters. I'm afraid, though, that its charm as preserved on this record completely escapes me. My guess is that the total effect depends upon watching the show; it most certainly does not come through the lackluster score by composer-lyricist-librettist Rick Besoyan. His idea was to poke gentle fun at the operetta traditions of our lyric theater—just as Sandy Wilson before him treated the twenties musical in "The Boy Friend". It may be that the operetta is its own best parody, and besides, the composers Mr. Besoyan chides, whatever the medium they were writing for, were gifted composers (Friml, Romberg, *et al.*). It may have seemed amusing to take obvious types of songs and write other songs just like them. This may have seemed funny in the frat house, or the living room, even in a night club, or it may possibly be funny to watch in a small theater—but it does seem flat and pointless coming from a loudspeaker in my living room. In fact, I prefer the original songs (many of which are echoed in Mr. Besoyan's score). Now that he has this obvious thing out of his system perhaps he can concentrate on something really original. However, I found the singing of Elizabeth Parrish very fine, indeed, and hope to hear her again soon.

Speaking of visual impact reminds me of **The Fabulous Josephine Baker** (RCA Victor LM-2427), who, like T. S. Eliot, is a fugitive from St. Louis. An exciting personality from her Parisian debut in 1925, Miss Baker (or does she prefer Mlle.?) has remained so, pretty much undiminished, to this day. I would strongly question the assertion in Janet Flanner's liner note that "she founded the European cult for jazz", even suggesting a great influence upon Stravinsky

(who composed *Ragtime* in 1918 and the *Piano-Rag Music* in 1919) and *Les Six*, one of whom was Milhaud (who composed *La Création du Monde* in 1923). Of such are false legends made. But this has nothing to do, really, with the record at hand, which is a wonderful souvenir of La Baker's successful revue, "*Paris Mes Amours*", which opened in Paris in 1959. Although she is not one of the great vocal personalities, Josephine Baker is a marvelous personality, period—and this excellently recorded album is a "must" not only for her fans, but for anyone interested in the theater. Although Josephine Baker is already a part of history, I might add that she does not at all sound like a fossil.

Nor does the other glory of France, Maurice Chevalier, whose latest album is **Life Is Just A Bowl of Cherries** (M-G-M E-3801). There is nothing new to say about Chevalier, nor actually, does he do anything new; he just continues to project his winning personality. Among the songs included are the Duke-Harburg *April in Paris* and Weill and Anderson's *September Song*. These serve to balance the usual ebullient proceedings. Very good accompaniment is furnished by Ray Ellis.

Vernon Duke, who knows a thing or two about good songs—he has written a number himself, but you'd never glean it from a study of the record lists—describes **Andre Previn Plays Songs By Jerome Kern** (Contemporary © 7567) as "a honey of an album". And so it is, for Previn is a most ingenious and sensitive pianist and an extremely well educated musician. His inventive flair inevitably leads him into sounds afieled from the originals, which is all right though, in truth, Kern is hardly the composer who lends himself to jazz treatment very readily. Previn's ideas always prove interesting, particularly when he treats such worn material like *Long Ago and Far Away*, *Ol' Man River*, *They Didn't Believe Me*, and *All the Things You Are*. Also included are such lesser known items as the early, and lovely, *Go Little Boat* plus *Whip-Poor-Will* and *Put Me to the Test* which are, as always with Mr. Previn's interpretations, very interesting and completely musical, if not always complete Kern. Not for purists who prefer their Jerome Kern straight. Mr. Duke's liner notes, by the way, are a model of what this sort of thing should be.

Location recording has become the thing these days, particularly in night clubs. There is something to be said, I suppose, for capturing the excitement of an actual performance although, I also suppose, the audience participation mitigates against full enjoyment of the record the second time around, and may even get

worse on repetition. Unless you play the records at a party, dim the lights and imagine you're all There.

In **The Persian Room Presents Diahann Carroll** (United Artists 3080), Miss Carroll, certainly one of the most gifted of the younger vocalists, betrays a tendency I've noted before of coming on like Buster's gang, of bearing down hard on the innuendo, and projecting the personality until it almost hurts. One of the characteristics of the Smart Joins is the din, and in order to offset that the orchestrations must also blare, screech, and thump. These are conditions hardly favorable to the singing of songs. Also, the visual aspect is important. And I am here to tell you that Miss Carroll is quite a vision! Further, she *can* sing like an angel, but the clubs and their sophisticated patrons prefer devils. So we are treated to refined caterwauling and the music of Hades: all this may be exciting to watch (consider the clinging, nay grasping, gown, the dramatic lighting), but the effect in the living rooms adds up to sheer aural impact. This is not to suggest that Diahann Carroll caterwauls—she is one of the most gifted singers around today—when she sings like Diahann Carroll and doesn't try too hard. Thoreau said it: "Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity!" A little more of this, and a lot less of the Hard Sell would be more effective and enjoyable. But Miss Carroll cannot help but sing beautifully as in her rousing opener, *Everything's Coming Up Roses*, or the romantic *Misty*, *Taking a Chance on Love*, *Happiness Is a Thing Called Joe*, or *Stormy Weather*. In the special material department is Harold Rome's *Shopping Around*, and there is a rather embarrassing version of *Goody Goody*, and an overlong monologue introducing a fine performance of *I Wish I Were in Love Again*. Miss Carroll has it, but I wish she would not listen to whoever it is who tells her how to use it. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity!

■ **Gisele MacKenzie at the Empire Room** (Everest 5069) seems to me a much less aggressive experience, which may be attributed to the personalities of the individual singers. And the orchestra backing Miss MacKenzie seems much less *Blitzkrieg*-like, and thus easier listening. Miss MacKenzie's songs are not always very distinguished, but her *An Opening Song* is pretty good satire, and she does a good medley from "Gypsy" (a show score I must admit I originally underestimated. Further listenings of the cast album have convinced me I sold it low when I originally reviewed it here. I eat humble pie).

But to get back to the nightclub records, I prefer to stay home, and perhaps so should the recording engineers. —E.J.

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THE MONTH'S JAZZ

Martin Williams is our chief jazz critic. Joe Goldberg and Larry Gushee are associate jazz critics. The responsibility for this column is sometimes divided, sometimes rotated, among them.

Arthur Kleiner: *Musical Moods From the Silent Films.* Golden Crest CR-4019, \$4.98.

▲THIS is nostalgia, and is presented as such, but with an admirable lack of the condescension that has marred many similar projects—collections of vaudeville songs, for example. Mr. Kleiner is Musical Director of the Museum of Modern Art Film Library, and in that capacity has become thoroughly familiar with all this music. He is by no means a great piano player, but that is just as well. He substitutes knowledge, respect, and affection in his playing of this music, which includes, besides several examples of standard cues, the themes from *A Fool There Was*, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, *The Birth of a Nation*, and others. From this, remember, came *Alexander Nevsky*. The package is decorated with several stills that are almost worth the price themselves. —J.G.

●
Django Reinhardt: *The Best of Django Reinhardt.* Capitol set TBO-10226, \$9.96.

▲REINHARDT is, of course, a legend, but prior to this release I had no closer acquaintance with his music than the piece John Lewis named for him. The great majority of the four sides are made up of records made by the Quintet of the Hot Club of France (violin, bass, two rhythm guitars, and Django's solo guitar) in 1937. These tracks are enormously dated in a pleasant, nostalgic, "Oh, play that thing" kind of way, and, in that way, have great charm. However, on five tracks, cut in 1939, Django plays with Rex Stewart, Barney Bigard, and Billy Taylor, who were all participants in the wonderful and enduring small-group sides Ellington made at the same time, and the question of comparative jazz musicianship comes up. It may be enormously unfair to compare the Frenchman with Ellington, but the comparison is there to be made, and in all areas, particularly the essential one of rhythm, it is ruinous to the French. Django, however, survives the switch in groups, which is certainly

one that would separate the men from the boys and, in his fashion, acquits himself quite well.

What is that fashion? He plays extremely romantic, sentimental music, based as much on his own folk tradition (gypsy) as on jazz, with a heavy, almost oppressive vibrato. It is filigree work that has an immediate charm, and the charm communicates and wins one over even when the musical ability would not, so that one is ready to forgive the constant repetition of favorite runs and ideas that occur on even these few recordings. In this respect, one is reminded of Chevalier. But, in the matters of folk music, romanticism, vibrato, filigree, and in the basic matter of playing what might be called an unessential instrument in a completely personal, inimitable way, the man who comes to mind—and this is, admittedly, a strange comparison—is a much finer jazz musician, Milt Jackson. The difference, of course, is that Jackson's tradition is the source of jazz. —J.G.

●
Jimmy Witherspoon. *Jimmy Witherspoon at Monterey.* HIFI Jazz J-421, \$4.95.

▲ANY break into the big time would be hard put to it to come up to Ralph Gleason's ecstatic description in these liner notes, but Jimmy Witherspoon's appearance at the 1959 Monterey Jazz Festival falls fearfully short of the mark. As a blues singer, he has precisely the sort of appeal (composed of constant sexual references and the peculiar false excitement common to rhythm-and-blues performers—two parts bad jokes and two parts exhortations to musicians, invariably at the most unmusical, honking portions of their solos) that keeps some men working in the same small club year after year, commanding an intense neighborhood following that listens to the same songs and ad-libs endlessly. If you visit one of these clubs, on the insistence of a friend who is a regular, it is easy to fall into the half-musical, half-social camaraderie of the place. To bring off the same atmosphere before a festival-sized crowd is

something only the greatest performers could do, and judging from this record, Jimmy Witherspoon is not one of those performers. He comes closest on *Nobody's Business* (which he did not write, record label notwithstanding), where he is aided by wonderful support from Earl Hines and a gently lyric solo by Ben Webster, but the rest of the set—Eldridge, Hawkins, and all—is a rock-and-roll bash. The audience seemed highly satisfied, and the recording is superb. —J.G.

Thelonious Monk: *Thelonious Alone in San Francisco.* Riverside RLP-12-312, \$4.98.

▲THIS is the most satisfying album Thelonious Monk has released in quite a while. The most immediately apparent reason for this is that it is a solo album, and so the listener (and Mr. Monk) are not dealing with the often indifferent solos or off-the-point arrangements of his recent releases. Which is only a way of saying that it was never Monk's playing that lowered the value of those releases. I will not go into speculation on the virtues of solitude, however. It is much more to the point to say that this album is also superior to Mr. Monk's previous solo album, *Thelonious Himself*. There is nothing here that quite comes up to that album's extraordinary *Functional*, which is practically a capsule history of jazz piano, but *Functional* far outdistanced the other pieces on that set. On the other pieces in the previous album, Mr. Monk, who is indeed the most functional of pianists, lapsed into a self-indulgence that is extremely rare for him, and that is happily missing from this set, except for *Pannonica*. Here he plays three blues, one of which is his best recorded performance of *Blue Monk*: it has a remarkable cohesiveness, at least one unusually long line that will probably make John Lewis sit up sharply, tensely altered harmonics, and an affecting suggestion of *Am I Blue?* On *Bluchawk*, which bears a strong family resemblance to his *Straight No Chaser*, he again demonstrates his kinship to the Harlem stride pianists. He, too, could probably play the blues all night long.

Two other numbers come to mind for special consideration. Apparently Mr. Monk finds pleasure, when playing Irving Berlin tunes, giving a gentle, sardonically sentimental imitation of beginners on his instrument. On his former solo album, he did it with *All Alone by the Telephone*. This time, it is *Remember*. But the loveliest thing in the album, for its revelation of the romanticism that constantly lurks behind Mr. Monk's toughness is *You Took the Words Right Out of My Heart*.

Incidentally, I am at a loss to understand why Riverside, on both the liner

notes and advertising for this album, is making so much of the fact that a performance of *There's Danger in Your Eyes, Cherie*, is included. It should no longer come as a surprise to anyone how well Monk knows the old songs. —J.G.

Duke Ellington: *Festival Session.* Columbia CL-1400, \$3.98.

▲PERHAPS the best way to begin this is with a quotation from Lewis Mumford, in a discussion of Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim Museum: "If I have occasion to speak severely, remember that I am talking about a true artist, one of the most richly endowed geniuses this country has produced—an artist who has no need for the apologetic leniency one might accord to a lesser talent." Mr. Ellington, in so many ways the major architect of modern jazz music, fills all of the conditions of that quotation, but his recordings are no longer the cause of delight they once were, and are now received with some trepidation.

The great majority of this record presents compositions Mr. Ellington wrote specifically for various jazz festivals which took place this past summer. Two of them, *Copout Extension* (as its title indicates, an expansion of a previous piece) and *Dual Fuel*, are attempts to recapture former crowd-pleasing successes that were only peripheral to his music in the first place. The first is another marathon excursion for saxophonist Paul Gonzales, an indifferent soloist, in the manner of *Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue*. The second is a return to *Skin Deep*, this time with two drummers, who, by playing at once, destroy the swing of what might have been an excellent middle section. On the other hand, the opening section of *Idiom '59*, scored for a New Orleans-style clarinet and two muted trumpets, is heartbreakingly lovely. Which leads to the thought that some of the best of Ellington (the big band and combo sides of the late thirties, just before the band of the early forties, which was slightly too involved in the swing era) was concerned with the restatement in modern terms of New Orleans conceptions (only one of several achievements, but pertinent here), always with a magnificent economy. There were no show-business frills, and one drummer was sufficient.

On this record, the delight (and the evidence of stature) is Ellington as pianist. On *Perdido*, he fills between Clark Terry phrases as a forerunner of Monk, and his introduction to *Copout Extension* foreshadows Cecil Taylor. Elsewhere, his piano shows the economy, energy, and impeccable taste that I wish were present in his orchestra. —J.G.

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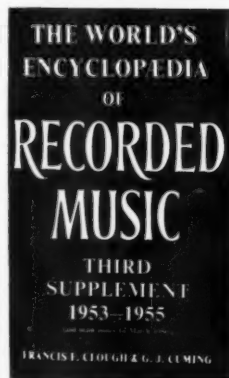
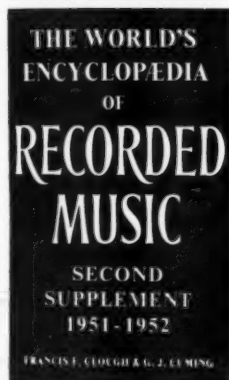
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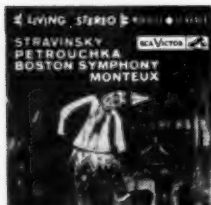
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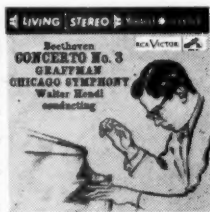
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